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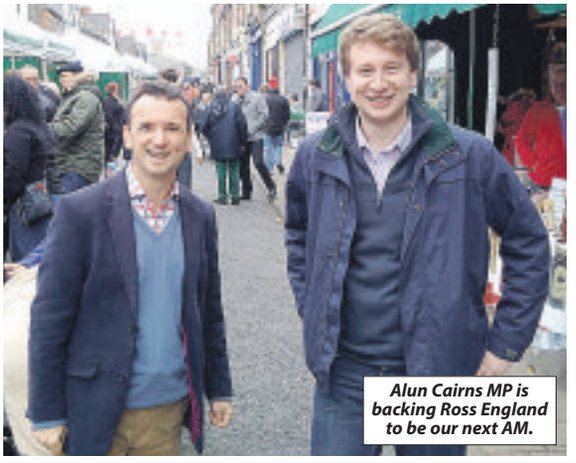
THURSDAY, MARCH 31ST, 2016

ROSS ENGLAND - STANDING UP FOR BARRY & THE VALE

ROSS ENGLAND ON COURSE TO BE NEXT AM

SUPPORT SWELLS FOR LOCAL CAMPAIGNER



Alun Cairns MP is backing Ross England to be our next AM.

Our reporter has witnessed the swelling of support for the energetic Conservative candidate over recent months as a result of his determination to fight for Vale communities in Cardiff Bay. His record of getting the parking charges scrapped, 'travellers' removed and street lights fixed across the Vale has won him plaudits from across the political spectrum.

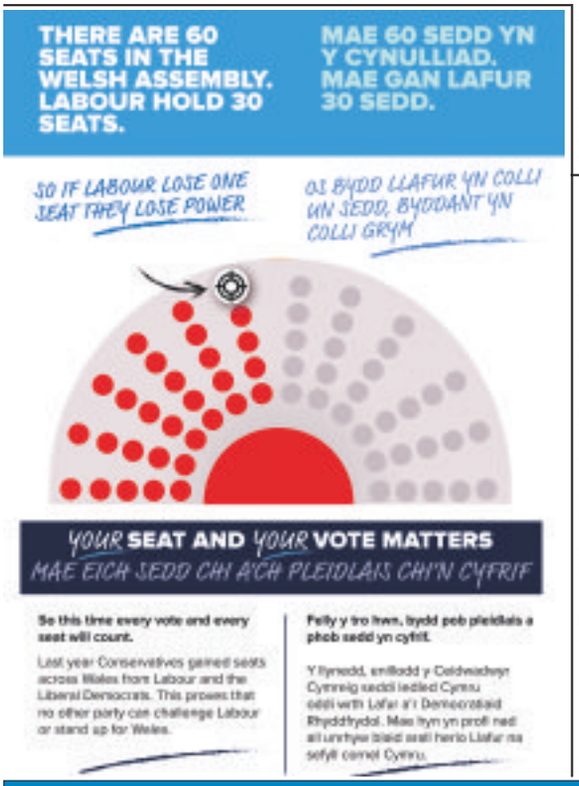
Alun Cairns is backing Ross to be our next AM and urging everyone to lend him their vote in May's election to secure a better future for the Vale. He said, "The Vale needs a champion in the Welsh Assembly to stand up for our area – Ross England will be that champion.

"Ross has already succeeded in forcing the council to consult with traders and ultimately back down on parking charges. As a candidate he has had success in securing positive outcomes for communities across the Vale – as an AM he will be able to secure a better future for our whole county.

"I know Ross well. He cares deeply about the area. Local people trust him to stand up for the Vale at every opportunity.

"He will work hard to scrap the Welsh Government's excessive housing targets for the Vale, increase support for our bus routes by de-funding the T9 'Ghost Bus' and bang the drum for investment in Barry."

Labour only hold thirty of the sixty seats in the Assembly. If Ross England wins the Vale's Welsh Assembly seat from Jeremy Corbyn's Labour party on May 5th, Labour will lose control in Cardiff Bay.



Parking charge plans ditched – Ross England thanks community

Conservative assembly candidate Ross England has thanked 125 businesses and over 7,000 residents for supporting his successful campaign to fight plans to introduce parking charges in Barry, Cowbridge and Llantwit Major after the Labour controlled Vale Council finally caved in and ditched the controversial plans.

Ross England worked closely with local people across the Vale, who were unanimous in calling for the Labour council to scrap plans to charge. Following a highly successful campaign by Mr England, the local authority has been forced to ditch the ill-thought out plans that would have significantly damaged our high streets. Mr England has praised the leader of the Vale Council Cllr Neil Moore for pulling his fellow cabinet members, Cllr Gwyn John and Cllr Lis Burnett back into line after, with the support of the sitting AM, they pushed hard to introduce the damaging plan.

Ross England said: "Abolishing such damaging plans for car parking charges is a fantastic victory for people power – I was delighted to have the support of over 100 small businesses, and 7,000 residents to help me fight these plans. The Vale Council were determined to slip this policy through without consulting residents and traders. We campaigned to drag the local authority to the table to hear concerns from local people that would be hit by such a damaging policy. I pay credit to the communities of Barry and Cowbridge for winning the battle against such poorly drafted proposals from the Vale Council that were solely aimed at raising revenue and not helping our high streets."

Mr England has developed a reputation for standing up for communities in the Vale of Glamorgan – on the major issues like housing, authority mergers, car parking and regeneration he has demonstrated that should he be elected as your AM on May 5th he will continue to be an effective voice in Cardiff Bay.

The Vale and Wales need change

Vale voters told our reporter that the Welsh Assembly election is seen as the first real opportunity for change in Cardiff Bay since 1999.

Welsh Labour only hold half of the 60 seats in the Welsh Assembly, so Conservatives sense a chance to secure real change in Wales by winning local seats like the Vale of Glamorgan.

Welsh Conservatives know that their most important priority is to secure the implementation of the long-term economic plan in Wales. They feel that the UK's economic recovery is strengthening, but under Labour on many fronts, Wales is starting to fall behind.

Mr England said: "Welsh voters have a clear choice: between changing to a better future or sticking to the same old tired ideas that simply aren't working.

"After 17 years under Labour, Wales is falling behind as the state of the NHS shows. Labour complacency and incompetency risks Wales' long term future.

"David Cameron and the Conservatives have shown that they can deliver for the UK. The Welsh Conservative team will bring the same focus and discipline to provide a better future for Wales.

"Because it's only with competent leadership in Cardiff Bay and Westminster and a strong economy that we can pay for and have a good health service.

After 17 years of Labour the only way to get real change is to vote for the Welsh Conservatives."

He added, "This election is not just an opportunity to turn Wales around and stop us sliding behind the rest of the UK. It is an opportunity to secure a better future for the Vale.

"Now is our chance to stop the Vale becoming part of Cardiff, to unleash our local economy by cutting business rates and improving transport infrastructure. Together, we can give communities more control over development, support local bus routes and deliver the investment our area needs."

This 4-page wrap has been funded by voluntary donations to the Vale of Glamorgan Conservatives.

YOUR LETTERS

LAST CHANCE TO BUILD DINAS BY-PASS

Dinas Powys needs a by-pass, and I was delighted to hear Welsh Tory Leader Andrew RT Davies pledge to build it if he becomes First Minister.

The by-pass has been discussed since 1923, but this is the first time that it has been promised by someone who may be able to deliver it.

We all know that traffic is a huge problem in Dinas Powys and reduces quality of life in the village. Local residents must seize this opportunity to solve the problem by voting to have the by-pass built.

With dreadful decisions being made to plan for new houses on and near the proposed route of the by-pass, this election may be our last chance to secure it.

For Andrew RT Davies to become First Minister and deliver the by-pass, the Conservatives need to win the Vale of Glamorgan. That's why I'm encouraging all local people, whatever their politics, to give the local candidate Ross England their vote on May 5th.

Margaret Hayley, Dinas Powys

CONSERVATIVES NECESSARY TO BOOST LOCAL ECONOMY

Barry is on the up thanks to the hard work of local MP Alun Cairns who is always pushing for more private investment locally.

He was instrumental in making sure the new fairground went ahead, despite the Labour Council's record of putting off private investors. Likewise, the Welsh Labour Government starved Barry of regeneration funding and failed to put the right infrastructure in place for the town's future success.

Ross England will build on Alun's work, shouting from the rooftops for investment and fighting our town's corner in Cardiff Bay. Barry needs a hardworking AM, Alun Cairns and Ross England will make a great team backing communities in the Vale.

Peter Woodford, Barry

CARDIFF THREAT TO OUR GREEN SPACES

The Welsh Government's outrageous target of 10,000 new houses for the Vale has been an absolute disaster, leading to proposals for many inappropriate housing developments.

There has been pressure to build on Weycock Cross and development was proposed without the proper infrastructure in place. This would have been a disaster for the local community and for Barry.

I am grateful to Alun Cairns MP for working tirelessly to prevent the development, but I fear this is not the end of the story. If the Council merger with Cardiff goes ahead, senior planning officials say that all developments will be back on the table.

THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO PUT THE VALE FIRST

Speaking to people across the Vale of Glamorgan on the doorstep and at public meetings I am struck by the strength of the widespread desire for change in Cardiff Bay. And with Labour holding only thirty of the sixty seats in the Assembly, that change is possible on May 5th.

The result of the election will have a big impact on the Vale. If Labour cling on Barry will continue to be starved of public investment, the 'Ghost Bus' will continue at the expense of local routes and the rural Vale will continue to be ruined by excessive top-down housing targets. Worst of all, the Vale will be scrubbed off the map and explicitly used to meet Cardiff's housing demand.

The good news is that with Welsh Conservative momentum from last May, we have our best shot ever of securing real change in Cardiff Bay. Now is our chance to stop the Vale becoming Cardiff's Western suburb, to give communities more control over development and unleash Barry's potential. We can support local bus routes instead of the 'M'T9, build the Dinas Powys by-pass and secure a better future for our High Streets.

This isn't however, just an election about the Vale. It's about the whole country. Wales is falling further and further behind the rest of the UK. The slide of our schools down the international education rankings and the state of the NHS demonstrates the culture of incompetence and complacency in Cardiff Bay that we must change.

It's only with strong leadership under Andrew RT Davies AM and the hard work of the Conservative team that we can turn Wales around. I will be grateful if you can support us in this endeavour on May 5th.

PS. Labour only need to lose one seat to lose control of the Assembly - every vote here in the Vale will matter.

Ross England

Weycock Cross and other green sites not in the current development plan will not survive Cardiff's demand to build 20,000 new houses to meet their growing need of homes for commuters.

We cannot afford to take this risk, so I will be voting for Ross England who will stop the merger and campaign tirelessly to scrap the excessive housing targets.

Louise Phillips, Barry

CHAMPION FOR HIGH STREETS

I'm very impressed with Ross England's success in stopping the proposed town centre car parking charges and welcome this champion for the local community becoming our AM.

We need representatives like Ross who understand how business works, who know that we need to cut red tape and business taxes. We can't go on squandering Wales' economic potential with Jeremy Corbyn's party in charge.

Jane Spill, Llandow

ROSS WILL STAND UP FOR THE VALE

I'm urging local people to back Ross England at this election.

For years he has worked hard behind the scenes to help me campaign to secure a better future for the Vale.

We need a strong, effective constituency voice in Cardiff Bay to end Labour's neglect of our county. I know Ross has the experience, ability and determination to deliver for local communities. I look forward very much to working with him as our AM after May 5th.

Alun Cairns MP

ROSS WILL GET STUCK IN

The Vale needs an AM who will stand up for the whole area, no matter what the issue may be.

Be it car parking charges in Barry, broadband in the rural Vale or potholes on our roads, our representative must be prepared to put his or her head above the parapet. Simply posing for photographs is not enough – we need someone like Ross who will roll their sleeves up and get stuck in.

Whether you are from Dinas Powys, Ogmore, Llantwit or Cowbridge, Ross England is the man to deliver for the Vale in the Assembly as Alun Cairns does in Westminster.

Eileen Bennett, Llantwit Major

WHO WILL SAVE THE VALE?

I am deeply disappointed that Jane Hutt is actively seeking to have the Vale of Glamorgan scrubbed off the map and become part of Cardiff.

We need a voice for the Vale in Cardiff Bay, not the other way around. Our towns and villages will become a dumping ground for Cardiff housing needs and Ross England understands the fundamental change this would mean for our communities and green spaces. I know he will fight to save the Vale and will be a powerful voice speaking out on issues large or small.

Hannah Woodward, Colwinston

TIME FOR CHANGE - IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

The question is often asked - "what has Jane Hutt really done for us in the Vale?"

I receive letters from Jane saying she has represented us for 16 years, yet no information about how she is fighting our corner in the Assembly. Her actions suggest she is a voice for the Welsh Government in the Vale rather than a voice for the Vale in the Welsh Government.

To name a few examples, she supports the council merger, she supports the ridiculous 10,000 house building target and she supports the £500,000 expenditure for the T9 bus route while cutting subsidies to much needed bus routes. It is time for change – if not on May 5th, when?

Stephanie Wills, Peterston-Super-Ely

VOTE ROSS ENGLAND TO SECURE REAL CHANGE FOR WALES

Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party are asking the people of Wales for five more years to make the same mistakes over again, which have seen us fall behind the rest of the UK.

A Welsh Conservative Government will deliver the same competent leadership and economic management as the UK Conservative Government in Westminster, but to make that happen you've got to vote for it.

Labour only need to lose one seat to lose control of the Assembly, so the Vale could be the seat that decides the outcome. That's why it's vital that you vote for Ross England on May 5th to secure real change for Wales.

Andrew RT Davies AM, Leader of the Welsh Conservatives

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THURSDAY, MARCH 31ST 2016

Cowbridge Mayor prepares for end of year in office - PAGE 3

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'UNDER-STRENGTH WALES LEARN LESSONS'
GARETH JAMIESON - PAGE 36

Carole's half marathon raises £6,500 for LATCH!

"The last mile was the hardest part... running past LATCH's tent was a very emotional moment for me..."

Carole running in the half marathon.

Carole Bird

COWBRIDGE resident Carole Bird competed in the Cardiff World Half marathon on Saturday, March 26, finishing the race in two hours and 19 minutes and raising over £6,500 for LATCH through her efforts.

LATCH is a charity supporting children who are receiving treatment for cancer at the Children's Hospital for Wales; the charity also supports their families.

Carole began running only nine months ago, so although her primary aim in entering the half marathon was to raise money for LATCH, to complete the 13.1 mile run was also to meet a big personal challenge.

"The half marathon certainly was a challenge," she commented.

"The last mile was the hardest part. My legs did not want to carry on running, and I had to tell them they must! The various charities represented in the race had their tents lining the route, and running past LATCH's was a very emotional moment for me."

Anyone wishing to support LATCH and recognise Carole's achievement retrospectively, can still mae a donation by visiting *www.virginmoney giving.com* and searching for 'Carole Bird'. Donations will be accepted until April 26.

AMH

LEARNING IN LLANCARFAN PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVES A PIECE OF CAKE!

CHILDREN from class 1 in Llancarfan Primary School were treated to a visit by professional cake artist, Sarah Garland, from The Crafty Kitchen.

They have been learning all about food and where it comes from in this term's topic, 'Scrumptious'. Mrs Garland demonstrated how to ice and decorate cakes and then every child was able to make an Easter nest out of butter cream icing, complete with an edible chick and tiny chocolate eggs.

CH

Beacon for Queen's 90th

COWBRIDGE will be celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday by inviting the town to the lighting of a beacon on April 21.

It is planned that the evening will feature lots of local entertainment.

For full details, see the article on page 3.

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Readers' Letters

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• Letters and e-mails MUST include your FULL address and a contact telephone number.

An email address alone is not sufficient!

We reserve the right to edit all letters. We do NOT accept anonymous mail.

Pondering how to cast your vote

I READ the recent letter, written by Vivian Kelly published in The GEM concerning the pamphlet headed 'Vale of Glamorgan Chronicle'.

I received the same one and quickly read it. I will read any other political literature and consider its contents, regarding the forthcoming Welsh election in May. Whether it will cause me to change my political persuasion remains to be seen.

In respect of the Conservative candidate, Ross England, I have only seen pictures of him in The GEM and the Glamorgan Chronicle. I have never heard him speak, only read of things I assume he has said and stands for.

Is he the best candidate for the job? Who knows? How many of the better candidates (whatever that means) in the forthcoming election will gain seats?

I would argue that if elected, whatever party colour they stand behind, they will do their best for the electorate.

If more people contribute to a political party than another, then those with the more finance can certainly gain an advantage by using that money to publicise its policies more than those who do not.

It seems to me that people of reasonable wealth lean towards the Conservative party, but the Vale Council has over the years had alternating political parties running it. Which one has done the best job is an imponderable question!

FMD Knill, Pendoylan.

ASSEMBLY CANDIDATE IS 'SCAREMONGERING'

I WAS appalled when I read Ross England's article in the Conservative's Chronicle headed 'Last chance to save the Vale'.

He states that senior officials have warned that Cardiff's housing demand will be met by the Vale, which will also be a dumping ground for Cardiff politicians. It is most unlikely that any official would make such a statement, as it would have a political bias.

His view seems to emanate from rumour and hypothesis. There is no evidence of 20,000 houses. It is the Conservatives in the Vale who have been over-building in Barry during latter years, while the rural Vale has had little house building.

During the recent past, Vale councillors (apart from myself) have been totally against a Vale/Cardiff merger, and have made no secret of it. I have reason to believe that Ross has not given the full picture to the public, in light of the possible saving that could be made if Wales was reduced from 22 to eight authorities, including a Vale/Cardiff merger.

Reducing the number of chief execs, heads of education, social services, planning etc from 22 to eight and cutting the number of councillors from 1,250 to around 500, I estimate, would save the public purse approximately £21m each year.

Bearing in mind that council tax charges are lower in Cardiff than the Vale, there is a strong financial argument to support mergers in light of these figures and may give us a possibility of reduced council tax.

Currently, the offices of the Vale and Cardiff are 11 miles from each other. If anyone managed a company in the private sector on that basis it would result in bankruptcy. Let's not overlook the opportunities which may be well enhanced for Vale residents by being part of Cardiff which has a high level of economic activity.

Having just received another council tax bill, like many others, it concerns me that questionable allegations against mergers are given excessive adverse publicity against a background of scaremongering.

Let us not forget " Turkeys don't vote for Christmas".

Coun Philip Clarke, Independent.

'Voters have a right to know'

I HAVE just received a copy of The Chronicle, a newspaper, in which Alun Cairns, our local Member of Parliament, lauds his achievements on behalf of the citizens in his constituency.

The electorate has a right to know what our elected representative has been campaigning for or against. This awareness helps us to make an informed decision on whom we elect as our representative at the general election.

I was very disappointed to learn that Mr Cairns had voted in favour of cutbacks to disability benefit, this fact was missing from The Chronicle.

Mr Cairns, of all people, should be aware of the difficulties, both physical and financial, to people who are blind, confined to wheelchairs, or suffering life-threatening illnesses.

It was Mr Cairns who, while a member of the Welsh Assembly, found it stressful and tiring to travel to Cardiff from his home in the Vale to attend meetings... it was so stressful and tiring that he had to have a second home in Cardiff Bay, to be closer to the Assembly. Fortunately, he was able to claim expenses for the flat.

There is nothing wrong with that, but I would have thought his personal situation at the time would enable him to be more understanding of the problems faced by people less fortunate than himself.

Furthermore, it is ironic that he has just been promoted to Secretary of State for Wales because Stephen Crabb, the previous incumbent, has been appointed Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

This position was previously occupied by Ian Duncan Smith, who resigned in protest at the cutbacks to disability benefit.

Phil Sanders, Barry.

FIGHTING FOR FAIR RATES OF PAY IN WALES

I LOATHE hearing, "that's a good wage… for Wales." Wales has poor paying jobs because of Labour and Tory ineptness. My parents were in the 40-40-40 club.

They put us through university and a roof over our heads working 40 hours a week, for 40 years (in one company), for a 40 per cent cut in pay (a pension).

That's impossible today (unless one is a career politician). I followed their lead with five traditional employers (two banks, PwC global and two international law firms). I was headhunted into better jobs and moved.

Since 1998 though, I've worked in the EU as an interim manager, consultant and non-exec director for more than 20 companies in 14 industries. I prefer these 18 years for the variety.

I was also able to follow my passion for media, wrote seven books, launched four of my own businesses and accumulated knowledge to apply across multiple industries.

I worry my children may not have the same opportunities. Project work here pays 60-65 per cent of rates in London, the EU, Asia and the USA.

That's wrong. I'm standing to build an economy in this country that focuses on building more for our future than just new houses!

Denis Campbell, Liberal Democrats Assembly Candidate for The Vale of Glamorgan.

A message to the people of Rhoose

ON behalf of Cardiff Airport I am delighted to inform you that, following a lengthy procurement project, we are now preparing for the arrival of three new fire vehicles. They will be delivered to Cardiff Airport at approximately 10.30am on Monday, April 4.

On the day, the three fire vehicles will be delivered on wide flatbed trucks in one convoy. Due to the width of the fire vehicles, the airport will need to take steps to ensure they can pass through Porthkerry and Rhoose Roads without problems.

We request your cooperation in assisting this process by ensuring cars are singly parked on one side of the road, it is also important for safety reasons that children are not playing in and around the area during this time.

Following delivery of the new fire vehicles we will need to undertake an extensive training programme to ensure our fire crews are familiar with the vehicles both on and off the airfield. This training will take place in a series of training sessions between 9am – 5pm in order to minimise disruption, the training will continue at different points until the end of June.

Once again we request that consideration is given to the width of these vehicles, and as access is required on Rhoose Road it would be very helpful if cars could be singly parked wherever possible while this vital training is under way.

We will be working closely with the Vale of Glamorgan Council and South Wales Police to ensure this activity is completed safely and successfully.

We will be unveiling the new fire vehicles on June 28 and would be delighted to invite you along to a launch event, where their names will also be unveiled as chosen by pupils of Rhoose Primary School.

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to get in touch with the fire station manager on 01446 712 538.

Debra Barber, managing director and chief operating officer Cardiff Airport.

'COUNCIL TAX UP AS WELSH LAND SALES LOSE MILLIONS'

ONCE again, the Vale Council has decided to increase council tax, this time by 3.9 per cent.

I consider this absolutely scandalous. Since 1999, this tax has increased by 121 per cent. We are told this is due to reduced funding by the Welsh Assembly.

Perhaps the Assembly would have been in a better financial position if the sales of Welsh land had not been handled with such incompetence, resulting in the loss of millions of pounds to the Welsh people.

Name and address supplied.

'Council taxpayers are hard-pressed'

I AM disappointed that Labour have yet again passed an inflation-busting council tax increase at the Vale Council.

They have imposed an extremely punishing increase with the latest 3.9 per cent rise with many now asking when will it end, after around an 18 per cent increase since they started running the council with Llantwit First partners in 2012.

This is absolutely astonishing and just goes to prove that Labour continues to tax and spend instead of being better at managing the council.

What is even more astonishing is the amount of reserves that are being sat on by the council which could be used, instead of increasing our council tax bills.

Labour in the Bay short-change the Vale by not giving fair funding and loading up councils with more responsibilities. It all adds up to the burden yet again being passed on to the hard-pressed council taxpayer.

Coun Richard Bertin, independent.

'It's cars that bring in money'

IT'S great to see a new road to Barry Island, but it is through a brand new estate with limited parking, even for the residents.

Where are all these visitors to the Island going to park for the day – in Asda's car park, or on the roads around the estate and walk the rest of the way?

Island parking is hopeless – when the old Butlins' car park is developed, that leaves very little alternative for new visitors.

A multi-story on a grand scale is a must ; never mind a new footpath, it's cars that bring in money, not pedestrians.

Mike Clemett, Barry.

HIGH TIDE TIMES

(UNTIL APRIL 7)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
31 Thur	11.54	7.9		
01 Fri	00.24	7.8	12.57	7.6
02 Sat	01.49	7.4	14.25	7.6
03 Sun	03.11	7.8	15.58	7.9
04 Mon	04.31	8.4	16.54	8.6
05 Tues	05.27	9.2	17.55	9.4
06 Wed	06.18	9.9	18.43	10.1
07 Thur	07.15	10.4	19.28	10.5

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should check with a tide table specific to their location.

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PUPILS JUMP THROUGH HOOPS FOR SPORT RELIEF

Llancarfan pupils went hoop crazy!

THIS year's Sport Relief Day at Llancarfan Primary School was another great success.

The day was bright and sunny and perfect for all the school's sport lovers who were colourfully dressed up as their favourite sports players.

Everyone got their game on to raise money for Sport Relief. The junior children enjoyed a hula-hooping competition and the little ones competed in games of hoopla!

After a great day of fun and sports activities the school council raised over £50! We hope that everyone enjoyed the day and that the money raised will go towards helping those in need. Thank you to everyone who joined in.

REPORT BY THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

Iolo pupils show Sport Relief spirit

YSGOL Iolo Morganwg pupils raised money to support Sport Relief 2016 with a week of different sporting activities.

Mr Alun Roberts, Ysgol Iolo's sports co-ordinator, said: "This year we decided to move away from the traditional sports of football, rugby, netball and hockey and introduce the children to different sporting experiences.

"We took out the competitive element and built on the ethos of team building, taking our inspiration from Alex Jones, who took part in 'Hell on the High Seas', and Eddie Izzard running an amazing 27 marathons in 27 days. We invited local sports people to come and showcase their skills."

There were plenty of different sports to try. Simon Jones, the Vale Council disability sports officer, brought wheelchairs for the junior pupils to try their skills at wheelchair basketball and understand life living with a disability.

Jane Prentice-Jenkins from JPJ Dance School, Llantrisant, introduced the school from nursery to year-6 pupils to the invigorating and fun exercise of street dance.

Nathan Mullett of Vale Gymnastics set up the school hall as a gymnasium and had the children vaulting and somersaulting all day, while year-6 supervised SAQ circuits, problem solving and teamwork exercises with the younger classes. Years 4 and 5 had a presentation on 'Show Racism the Red Card', explaining how racism is not acceptable in sports today.

The week long activities certainly motivated the children, giving them a new insight into alternative sports and exercise, but perhaps the teaching staff of Ysgol Iolo have to be congratulated for starting their own running club – will it be 27 marathons for the staff next year?

Local hospital displays Julie's positive prose

Julie Croad (left) with Amelia Thomas.

PONTYCLUN poet Julie Croad has two poems about the positive side of life on display at a permanent exhibition in the Hafan y Coed Unit at Llandough Hospital.

Julie joined a creative writing course in September 2011 and began writing poetry about five weeks later. No one was more suprised than her... she'd never previously written anything poetic.

She writes about everyday things that suprise and annoy her, usually in a humorous style.

In 2014 she noticed a call for "uplifting" work to decorate the walls of a new unit in Llandough Hospital.

She submitted two poems about the positive side of life that were accepted and now form part of a permanent exhibition in the Hafan y Coed unit at Llandough.

Julie said: "I was expecting two A4 size frames on the walls containing the poems. Imagine my amazement at seeing what artist Amelia Thomas has done with them. I wrote the words to cheer readers and remind them of the positive things in life.

"I hope they will do this in Hafan y Coed for a long time to come."

Julie lives in Pontyclun where she is inspired by everyday events, nature and her neighbour's garden shed!

New NSPCC committee formed in St Hilary

WE are pleased to announce that a new NSPCC committee has been formed, and it will to be known as the St Hilary NSPCC Committee.

As you may be aware, the NSPCC is a the leading children's charity in the UK, specialising in child protection and dedicated to the fight for every childhood. It is the only UK children's charity with statutory powers and that means they can take action to safeguard children at risk of abuse.

As it is a voluntary organisation, it relies heavily on donations to support the various interventions to support children in need, notably Childline.

The president of the new St Hilary group is Mrs Fiona Curteis, who is a longstanding supporter and currently a member of the NSPCC Board, and the chair is Mrs Hilary Drew who has accessed the support services offered by the NSPCC during her professional career in the education field.

Our first fundraising event is a coffee morning to be held in St Hilary Village Hall at 10.30am on Thursday, April 14, to be followed by a 'Pimms, Puds and Jazz' evening to be held in May. Further details to follow.

The committee would welcome help to raise funds to support the amazing work done by the NSPCC to protect and help our most vulnerable children.

Further information about the NSPCC can be accessed on their website. (https://www.nspcc.org.uk).

SD

A letter to The GEM from the Mayor of Cowbridge with Llanblethian

AS our term of office as Mayor of Cowbridge with Llanblethian (not forgetting Aberthin) comes slowly but surely to an end this coming May, we will be holding two final events in April in support of our charities, Prostate Cymru and the Motivation and Learning Trust.

The first will be our final coffee morning on Saturday, April 2 in the Mayor Parlour at the Town Hall, 10.30am to 12.30pm. Why not join us and enjoy a cup of tea/coffee and a slice of homemade cake?

Our final event will be a formal dinner/dance on April 29 in the St Quentin's Suite at the Bear Hotel. Further details can be obtained from the town hall which is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 1pm, direct from myself on 01446 774520 or by email at *davecptmorris@tiscali.co.uk*

I do hope that despite your busy lives and schedules that you will be able to join us for this one final time.

Both Lorraine and I would like to say a huge thank you to all who have supported us during the past year at both the coffee mornings and the two evenings we held at the town hall, the Murder Mystery night and the evening with Fawlty Towers, both of which were a great success.

Coun David Morris, Cowbridge.

Queen's 90th birthday celebrations sees lighting of beacons

ON Thursday, April 21, Cowbridge with Llanblethian Town Council supported by other Cowbridge businesses and voluntary organisations, are celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday by lighting a beacon at the rugby ground, Cowbridge.

The beacon will be one of many lit all over the nation to recognise and celebrate the Queen's Birthday.

Sir Brooke Boothby, Vice Lord Lieutenant of South Glamorgan will be lighting the beacon. Also attending are the High Sheriff, Professor John Williams, and the Mayor of the Vale of Glamorgan, Coun Fred Johnson, as well as the Mayor of Cowbridge with Llanblethian, Coun David W Morris.

The beacon will be lit at 7.30pm, followed by a short firework display.

Performing from 6pm as part of the celebrations will be Y Bont Faen and Llanfair Primary School Choirs, Cowbridge Comprehensive School Orchestral Band, the Rock Choir, and there will be a physical training display by the Motivational Preparation College for Training, Motivational and Learning Trust.

The event is being sponsored by the Cowbridge Athletic Club, Cowbridge Rotary Club, Llantwit Major and Cowbridge Lions Club, Cowbridge University of the Third Age, the Royal British Legion and Arthur John & Co.

Refreshments will be available to purchase. Members of public are invited to attend this event and be part of this historic national celebration, recognising the Queen's 90th birthday.

COMMUNITY NEWS

TREOES, LLANGAN & ST MARY HILL

Your local correspondent is Nancy Davidge, "Tynewydd", Llangan. (01656) 860303

Llangan School

ON Tuesday, March 22, the school became a hub of activity with headteacher Miss Sue Price hosting an open evening for the parents of Llangan, with displays from the PTA.

A book fair and the popular Pencil Case of Cowbridge were featured. Refreshments were available with tea, coffee and homemade cakes.

The school is now closed for the Easter holidays and will reopen on April 11.

Young at Heart club

THE club closed on Thursday, March 24 to enable members to go on a coach trip to a local hostelry for lunch.

Once again, a big thank you from all the members to Anne Ellis, Barbara, Marje and Jean. In spite of the dreadful weather, everyone was in high spirits and were determined to enjoy themselves.

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Pupils in bonding exercise for Comprehensive

The transition event was a great success, and the pupils had a great time.

TEN year-12 pupils at Llantwit Major Comprehensive attended a transition event accompanying a group of primary school year-sixes to Llangrannog.

The schools involved were all connecting schools that are going to be transitioning to Llantwit Major Comprehensive in September. They were Ysgol Y Ddraig, St Illtyd, St Athan, Rhws and Wick and Marcross primary schools.

We arrived on Wednesday afternoon after the bus journey down to Llangrannog and the activities began immediately.

As they will be attending Llantwit Major Comprehensive school together, this was a great opportunity for the primary pupils to engage with one another.

Each day was packed full of activities, which included dry skiing, tobogganing, go-karting, quad-biking, archery, horse riding, trampolining, swimming, indoor team building, sports, wall climbing, high ropes and many more.

As year-12 pupils, we encouraged the pupils to join in all the activities and to engage with one another. We also had the chance to arrange a disco for the pupils.

The trip was a great opportunity for both the prefects and the year-6 pupils. We hope that they all enjoyed the three days as much as we did. Also, we look forward to seeing all the year-6 pupils in September and welcoming them to Llantwit Major Comprehensive School.

ELEANA SKITINIS (year-12 student)

Pupils show their talents at eisteddfod

ON Friday, March 4 pupils at Llantwit Major School performed in the annual eisteddfod, where the school showcased the exceptional level of singing, dancing and instrumental talents of their pupils.

Pupils showed their talent at the eisteddfod.

The school is split into four traditional Welsh groups: Hywel, Glyndwr, Llywelyn and Madog. These 'houses' create a friendly rivalry between everybody in the school – including teachers!

Throughout the eisteddfod, excitement filled the busy school hall and tensions rose as the acts prepared to perform.

The show started with the piano solos, with excellent performances from all competitors.

One performance stood out, with Jack Wilkinson winning the Best Entertainer award for his excellent rendition of *Bohemian Rhapsody*.

During the day, it was wonderful to see so many year-7 and year-8 pupils taking part in the ensemble and vocal solo competitions, taking the opportunity to impress on stage.

Every house took part in the house song competition, singing *Sosban Fach*. Hywel and Glyndwr were the joint winners of this competition and are now eagerly awaiting the invitation to sing at the Millennium Stadium one day!

The afternoon saw excellent competitions culminating in the 'Battle of the Bands' and the Chairing of the Bard ceremony.

Congratulations to Charlotte Twomey in year-7 for winning the chair this year for her fantastic poem 'Parti'. Ardderchog Charlotte!

Other notable performances saw Anya Trudgian and Georgia Williams winning the Best Performance award for their group dance duet, and the Most Dedicated Performance award went to Gemma Thomas in year-12 for her singing in the sixth form vocal solo.

The event celebrated the many talents of Llantwit Major School's pupils and it was clear that the performers enjoyed the opportunity to inspire the younger pupils in the school. This year, Hywel took home the winning trophy for the most points – only one point ahead of Madog. This will no doubt be a key motivator for the opposing houses in next year's eisteddfod!

Congratulations to all! *Llongyfarchidau i bawb!*

SB

SPORT RELIEF AT ST ATHAN

St Athan pupils enjoyed fun and games for Sport Relief.

ST ATHAN Primary School celebrated Sport Relief in style again this year.

All children and staff dressed in sporty gear to engage in fun sporting activities while fundraising for an amazing cause.

The day began with a 'Fitness Friday' whole school assembly getting everyone active, and during the afternoon the pupils challenged the staff to a number of fun sporting races.

The children were so skilled in these games that they won six out of the seven events. Congratulations to everyone involved.

LH

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Woman to tackle south Wales trek challenge

LAURA MCGREEVY, a resident of Llanmaes village, is taking on the South Wales Three Peaks Trial on Saturday, April 2, in aid of Emmaus South Wales (The Homeless Charity that works!)

Laura McGreevy

She will be accompanied by her husband Eamonn and friends Roger and Carol.

The intrepid trekkers will take on the 'Gold Route' – the most challenging of the three routes available. This is a hike of about 20 miles and 1,500 metres of ascent, which crosses over three prominent peaks around Abergavenny - The Blorenge, Sugar Loaf and Skirrid mountains.

"I just had a very big birthday" said Laura, "so I thought it was a good time to take on a big challenge for the charity that does so much for others.

"It has been 11 weeks of intensive training, but I think I am ready. Emmaus South Wales has also just had a big milestone with the opening the very first Emmaus Community for south Wales in Bridgend."

Emmaus was established by Abe Pierre, a Catholic priest who opened the first community in Paris in 1949. Since then this non-religious movement has grown to include more than 400 communities worldwide.

There are presently 24 communities in England and Scotland. The very first community for South Wales was opened in early 2016 in Bridgend.

Terry Waite, CBE, is the President of Emmaus, and the Duchess of Cornwall is the Royal Patron.

The Emmaus story is really a story about 'Companions', as residents are called. The reasons for their homelessness vary; relationship breakdown, substance abuse, poverty. But all Companions share a desire and drive to have a fresh start.

At Emmaus they learn new skills, discover hidden talents and develop friendships, giving them a sense of self-worth and independence. Companions often credit Emmaus as a turning point in their lives. The point when they shifted from despair to hope.

Companions live by a few basic rules: All are expected to work to the best of their ability within the social enterprise. This may be working in one of the seven shops, driving a delivery truck or working within the community home. There is also a 'no drinks, drugs, or violence' rule.

Emmaus currently runs a number of charity shops throughout south Wales. These are in Bridgend, Maesteg, Neath, Porthcawl, Cowbridge and Aberdare. Laura is hoping to raise £500 for Emmaus South Wales.

If you wish to make a donation to support this vital work please visit: https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/lauramcgreevy.

ISLAND'S COMEBACK ALMOST COMPLETE

Photographs by MIKE WILCOCK

THE Bank Holiday Easter weekend heralds the official start of Barry Island's spring and summer season.

Mike Wilcock was out and about on Easter Monday to capture some of the excitement of the day.

Day-trippers enjoyed the tourist railway, the Pleasure Park and spending time on the promenade.

More proof that Barry Island and its reputation as one of Britain's great resorts is back for good.

Local priests run half marathon for 'SIDS'

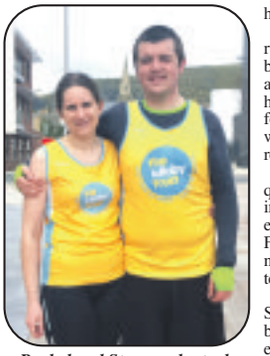
TWO priests took part in the World Half Marathon in Cardiff on Saturday as part of their fundraising drive in memory of a little girl who died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

The Rev Rachel Simpson and her fiancé, the Rev Steven Bunting, who only took up running last year, used the race as part of their training programme for the London Marathon next month.

With double Olympic champion Mo Farah heading up the field, they joined thousands of runners racing 13 miles around the streets of the Welsh capital, starting in the heart of the city outside Cardiff Castle.

Rachel, who is the curate in Llantwit Major, and Steven, who is the vicar of St Thomas Church, Swansea, signed up for the London Marathon as part of a team running to support the Lullaby Trust – an organisation that helps bereaved families that have lost a child to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Rachel explained: "We decided to help after a friend lost her eight month old daughter Erin very suddenly. Since that tragic death we've become aware of a lot more families who have lost children this way, many of whom not getting the support they need. This has shown us just how important this work is."



Rachel and Steven, who took part in the World Half Marathon in Cardiff, will take part in the London marathon on April 24.

"Neither of us had done any running before so it has been a big commitment for us, but it's also been made bigger as we have committed to raising £5,000 for the charity – a target that we're about £900 away from reaching.

"Taking up running has been quite a challenge. We've been introduced into the world of energy gels, protein shakes and Fartlek running, and we're still no clearer as to what some of the terms mean!

"As I live in St Athan and Steven lives in Swansea we've been trying to hold fundraising events in both areas so that we can reach more people."

Rachel and Steven would still be grateful for any support before the London Marathon on April 24 and anyone wishing to donate can give online at http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/Vicars

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Board says 'no loss of primary dental care in Barry'...

but Plaid angry at lack of consultation

Councillors Ian Johnson and Steffan Wiliam at Barry Hospital.

CARDIFF and Vale University Health Board has emphasised there will be no loss of primary dental care in Barry. The board's statment follows claims by local Plaid Cymru councillors that a loss of dental services at Barry Hospital had not been discussed with health watchdog, the Community Health Council, prior to 3,000 patients being advised to contact alternative dentists.

The board says a tender process is under way and the new arrangements will be communicated widely to people in Barry once completed.

Prior to the board's comments, Coun Johnson, who is Plaid's Assembly candidate, told The GEM: "The health board led by Maria Battle clearly stated that the board had *'consulted with the Cardiff and Vale Community Health Care on the proposals and gained their support for the process'*.

"We have now been told in no uncertain terms by the Community Health Council that this statement is inaccurate and only now are top level discussions under way with the health board.

"It is dreadful the way the health board is behaving. Thousands of patients have been forced to make alternative arrangements. The board failed to consult the public or the health watchdog."

Fellow Plaid Councillor Steffan Wiliam said: "The Community Health Council is there to speak up for patients. It seems the board has no respect for either patients or the official watchdog."

Plaid says it does not believe the health boards are fit for purpose. They say they are expensive and wasteful and would replace the seven boards with one strategic board.

The GEM approached Cardiff and Vale Community Health Council following Plaid's remarks, and it commented:

The Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan Community Health Council was made aware of changes to the Primary Care Dental provision at Barry Hospital following receipt of the letter informing patients of the imminent retirement of their dentist; the CHC was sent this letter by a patient in December 2015.

Upon receipt of the letter the CHC immediately raised its concerns with the health board and received assurances that further discussions and engagement would take place early in the New Year. Unfortunately, the CHC was made aware of the situation when we were contacted by a concerned patient in February following a freedom of information request to the health board which stated "the CHC had been engaged and agreed to the process being followed".

Stephen Allen, Chief Officer of the Communiy Health Council, added: "It was disappointing that the health board did not engage with us early in the New Year as indicated, and incorrectly indicated our support in its reply to the Freedom of Information request".

He went on: "The Primary, Community and Intermediate Clinical Board who has responsibility for this service had now apologised for the FOI inaccuracy and oversight in engaging with the CHC on this issue".

Mr Allen added that the issue was due to be discussed last Thursday, March 24, at the CHC Primary Care Oversight, Scrutiny and Performance Group (OSPG) "where a way forward would be agreed between the CHC and health board".

The GEM put Plaid and the CHC's statements to the health board and asked if it would like to respond.

Clare Evans, head of primary care services at Cardiff and Vale University Health Board said: "The health board would like to reiterate that there is no loss to primary care dental provision in Barry and the same contract will be delivered by two dental practices in the area.

"This has been provided on a temporary basis while the tender process is under way and the new arrangements will be communicated widely to the Barry area once the tender process has been completed.

"Prior to the end of the Barry Hospital dental contract, all patients who had been treated in the previous 24 months were written to by the practice informing them of the temporary interim arrangements up to the March 31 2016. The community dental service for vulnerable patients will however continue to operate from Barry Hospital.

"We are engaging with the Community Health Council to ensure that the public are aware of the changes to primary care dental provision in the area."

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372 (BARRY) SQUADRON IS THRILLED TO MEET TOP 'RED ARROWS' PILOTS

The Squadron with Flight Lieutenants Mike Bowden and Stu Campbell of the Red Arrows.

Cadet Rhian Horton with Stu Campbell and Mike Bowden.

RECENTLY, Air Cadets from 372 (Barry) Squadron met two pilots from the world famous Red Arrows aerobatic display team at the University of South Wales.

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Royal Aeronautical Society, the Cardiff branch organised the visit and a presentation from two pilots from The Red Arrows – Flight Lieutenant Mike Bowden (Red 4) and Flight Lieutenant Stu Campbell (Red 8).

Both pilots gave a fascinating insight into their flying careers with the Royal Air Force and the various fast jet aircraft they have flown.

Mike also spoke about the selection process to become a Red Arrow pilot; the rigorous winter training programme to prepare for the forthcoming air display season; and what it is like to fly the Hawk T1 aircraft while pulling 7G (where the human body weighs seven times its normal weight); often at 400 knots, sometimes just six feet apart from the next aircraft. The way both pilots spoke passionately about life in the Red Arrows captured the imagination of the entire audience.

The Red Arrows, has been displaying since 1965; with a trademark combination of close formation precision flying, and is considered to be the premier aerobatic team in the world.

The team is made up of more than 120 people, including pilots, engineers and essential support staff and they are based at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire.

The team has a number of important roles including: supporting UK industry and commerce, to demonstrate excellence, precision and the best of British; to showcase the professionalism of the Armed Forces – their capability, innovation and adaptation; to carry out defence diplomacy overseas, providing vital support for UK industry, to be global ambassadors for the Royal Air Force, Armed Forces and the UK, and to aid recruitment into the Armed Forces.

The Cadets were eager to ask many questions after the presentation and to have their photographs taken with both Mike and Stu, who were both keen to oblige.

The Cadets who attended the presentation were: James Jelinski, Alex Wilton, Rhian and Rhys Horton, Zena Poulakis, Tash Gill, Sam Smith, Jenna Day, Nathan Thompson, Alex Cheeseley, Dan Broadband and Shannon Stait.

The Cadets now return to an action-packed training programme of flying, gliding, shooting, team building exercises, sport, adventurous training and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

If you have a spirit for adventure, 372 Squadron welcomes all young men and women between 12 (in school year 8) –17 years old. The Squadron parades at 5th Barry Scouts on Everard Street, Barry. Monday evening 7:30pm – 9:30pm and Wednesday evening 7pm – 9.30pm. You can also contact the Squadron on 07486 501864, email oc.372@aircadets.org or visit www.372squadron.org for more information about becoming an Air Cadet.

JASON HORTON

St Augustine's marks its 150th anniversary

ST AUGUSTINE'S Church in Penarth is going to be 150 years old this year and there will be a number of events to mark the occasion.

The first will be a talk entitled 'The Building of St Augustine's' by Alan Thorne on Saturday, April 9 (2.30pm) in the parish hall, Albert Road, Penarth.

Other plans include a flower festival over the weekend of June 11-12.

To mark the actual date of the anniversary, there will be a special service on September 11.

The speed with which St Augustine's was built was remarkable; on June 8, 1865 the foundation stone was laid and the church was dedicated 15 months later on September 11, 1866.

An account of the dedication gives a glimpse into how people felt about their new, very imposing church which towered above the 'village' of Penarth.

The 'new' church, designed by William Butterfield, a Gothic Revival architect, replaced the old medieval church.

The church, given to the parish by Lady Windsor, cost £10,000 and was built to cater for the expanding population in Penarth caused by the building of Penarth Docks.

One hundred and fifty years on, St Augustine's is still serving the local community with enthusiasm and commitment. The congregation is somewhat smaller, but there is still a sense of real community and welcome.

The church attracts many visitors who come to see its wonderful polychromatic interior, the arts and crafts roll of honour and Joseph Parry's grave.

If anyone has any information or photographs that could be used in an exhibition that is being arranged, please contact Tricia Griffiths on 02920 707828 or email: triciagriffiths65@yahoo.co.uk

Tricia Griffiths

Councillor's Easter visit to hostel

A BARRY councillor dropped in with some goodies to a hostel over the Easter break.

Independent Coun Richard Bertin popped into the Llamau John Rowley hostel for teenagers to present some Easter eggs in the town.

Youth worker Addy Gratton was on hand to receive the gifts.

Coun Bertin said: "It is always a pleasure to support this hostel which is located within my ward.

"These young people are always grateful whenever I drop in to see them."

'STUNNING PERFORMANCE' AT ALL SAINTS CHURCH

The St Donats Atlantic Chorale.

ST DONATS Atlantic Chorale, supported by Opus 8 Chamber Ensemble and soloists Rhys Batt, Gareth Blake, Gareth Edmunds, Mathew Clark, Anne Braley and Alison Wray, gave a stunning performance of the *St John's Passion* to a packed church at All Saints, Barry.

The production team of James Bull, who accompanied the choir on keyboard and Carl Grainger, the musical director, led the choir from the front.

Carl Grainger commented: "The *St John's Passion* works when the performers are completely committed to it and everyone committed with fierce passion and concentration and a quality of singing that surpassed his wildest dreams".

The next concert for the choir will take place at Dyffryn Gardens on June 24 with an outdoor evening performance of lighter music commencing at 7.30pm.

The choir rehearses at St Donats Art Centre in Atlantic College on a Monday evening from 7.30pm to 9.30pm and will start again for the summer concert on April 11.

Everyone is welcome, there are no auditions required, just a keen interest in singing. For queries you can email me on rjd1349@hotmail.co.uk.

RICHARD BAYLISS

Vale AM will 'fight tooth and nail' for local Post Office

Jane Hutt AM (right), Coun Emma Pritchard and Stuart Taylor, Head of Crown Post Office.

VALE AM Jane Hutt handed a petition with 4,600 names, to a Post Office chief with Barry Town Mayor Emma Pritchard at the Memorial Hall, Barry.

She said: "I am appalled that the Post Office has admitted that a major reason for closing Holton Road Post Office rests on the fact that the lease of the building is up next year. This is completely unacceptable and shows that the Post Office just doesn't care about its services any more. We will fight this closure tooth and nail."

PACT MEETING CHANGE

PLEASE note there is a change to the date of the next Rhoose PACT meeting:

The original date was Thursday, March 31 at the Fontygary Inn, Rhoose – this has now moved to Friday, April 1 at the Fontygary Inn, Rhoose at 11am.

Pupils make a movie

Students at the premiere of their film at the Millennium Centre

RECENTLY a group of year-7 students at Barry Comprehensive were invited to the Wales Millennium Centre to give a presentation and attend the premier of their film *Transforming Transition*.

The film was made in partnership with Barry Comprehensive School, Barry Communities First and the Big Learning Company. The students were involved in every aspect of the film. They decided what it should be about, conducted interviews, held expert panels and question and answer sessions in primary schools as well as presenting and editing.

The film is aimed at both parents and students and gives some very helpful hints and tips on transition from primary school to comprehensive school.

While making the film, the students were lucky enough to interview Dr John Coleman, who gave some great advice for parents. The film was very well received and the boys are very proud of it and gave an excellent presentation.

The film is available on YouTube, search for 'Transforming Transition Preparing Pupils for their Future!'

Vale Council and volunteers team up to help medical centre

DINAS POWYS' new £2.7 million medical centre has opened its doors to patients.

The new centre will serve 10,000 residents in a modern, high quality, primary care facility that will enable the delivery of first class essential and enhanced primary care services.

To help residents to reach the new centre, the Vale Council and Dinas Powys Voluntary Concern (DPVC) have been working in partnership to provide assistance to patients travelling to and from the medical centre.

A brand new Volkswagen Caddy will be used to transport Dinas Powys residents to and from the new medical centre at the top of Murch Road.

The vehicle was purchased by the Vale Council, with the cost of running the vehicle to be covered jointly by the council and DPVC.

It will be available every morning (Monday to Friday), to transport residents of Dinas Powys to pre-booked appointments at the medical centre. In the afternoons, the vehicle will be made available to members of Greenlinks, the Council's Community Transport Scheme.

Coun Lis Burnett, cabinet member for regeneration, said: "I am pleased that we have been able to provide a vehicle to help transport residents to their new medical centre.

"Working in partnership with Dinas Powys Voluntary Concern, we have provided a much needed transport link that will benefit Dinas Powys and increase residents' access to Greenlinks in the eastern Vale."

Details on booking medical centre transport can be found at www.dpvc.org.uk. To find out more information on community transport, visit www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/greenlinks.

QUIZ NIGHT

VALEPLUS is holding a quiz night at its centre in High Street on Friday, April 15 at 7pm. Tickets £6 including a light buffet.

Teams of up to six people, please. There will also be a bar and a raffle, all are welcome and details are available from the website www.valeplus.org.uk or by contacting Steve on 01446746691. All proceeds will go towards the minibus appeal.

MAYOR BOOSTS RNLI

The Mayor and fellow RNLI sponsor, Mr Ken Sievewright.

THE Mayor of the Vale made an official visit to the Barry Dock Lifeboat recently. During his year of office, the Mayor, Coun Fred Johnson, has pledged to raise as much money as possible to support the RNLI.

Coun Johnson said: "Last year, our lifeboat crews saved 460 lives around the UK. That's 460 people who wouldn't be here today without their help.

"The Barry Dock Lifeboat station has operated an all-weather lifeboat for over 100 years.

"The crews have been honoured with 14 awards for gallantry."

The mayor's last major fundraising event is hosting a 'Black Tie Charity Ball' on April 30 at Cottrell Park. For more information and for tickets, contact the Mayor's office on 01446 422406; all proceeds will go to the RNLI.

Dinas goes bananas over Fairtrade fruit

HAVE you ever wondered where your breakfast comes from? The recent Fairtrade campaign showed how we depend on half the world for the products in a typical breakfast.

Many of these can now be bought as Fairtrade items, helping the poorest in the world to receive a fair price, build their communities and prevent child labour.

Newly available in Dinas Powys are Fairtrade bananas, which Tesco Express is selling following requests from the Fair Trade group and others.

Several Fairtrade fortnight events offered these, along with many other tasty products, to residents who came along.

The need for fairer trade is also close to home, and the Dinas Powys events highlighted the problems faced by Welsh dairy farmers in getting a fair price for their products.

The 'breakfasts' involved all the local primary schools, their parents and some Saturday morning shoppers.

At St Andrew's Major Church in Wales Primary School, for instance, a group of pupils worked together to make a lively presentation to parents, using material from a Fairtrade assembly they had given in the school.

A Dinas Powys Fairtrade directory shows which products can be bought in local shops and food outlets. In all, well over 500 villagers received copies of this or heard about products that were available locally during Fairtrade Fortnight.

The directory is now being renewed because of the new Fairtrade products that are on offer.

A local survey in 2015 showed that customers would buy a still wider range of products if they were available for sale in the village, so there is plenty of potential for Fairtrade to grow further. You can catch up on progress via Facebook under DinasPowysFairtrade.

DAVID BACON

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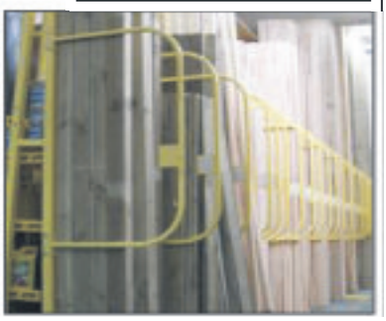

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'Balancing essential work with the needs of the community'

VIEW FROM THE VALE

by Coun **NEIL MOORE** Leader of the **Vale of Glamorgan Council**

I WOULD like to use this month's column to first of all address two issues that have garnered coverage in the local press in recent weeks, and bust a few myths that have grown from this.

The first of these is the programme of roadworks that have been taking place on the Barry Island causeway.

In the run-up to the Easter bank holiday there were three separate schemes underway, only one of which was work being undertaken by the council.

The Dwr Cymru works, which required temporary traffic lights on the causeway itself, were essential upgrades to their infrastructure.

The works to upgrade the Cosy Corner junction, being undertaken by the Waterfront consortium, represent a key stage in the construction of the new Island link road.

While the council scheme to provide an improved cycle and footpath is central to our plan to enable more people to travel to the resort in ways other than by using their cars, clearly all of these are essential works.

As a local authority the Vale of Glamorgan Council must facilitate the work of other organisations, such as utility companies. An element of disruption is inevitable with any roadworks. However, we do all we can to ensure this is kept to an absolute minimum.

Ahead of the busy Easter weekend the council took steps to ensure that the main access road to the resort was fully open. We ensured all temporary lights were removed, deployed traffic management officers at the resort, and worked with the consortium to temporarily open the new road to provide a second exit route for traffic.

It was thanks to these measures that we once again saw a busy bank holiday weekend pass without incident.

This bank holiday weekend also saw the launch of the new online booking system for the Barry Island beach huts. The new booking system is part of new management arrangements that are being put in place for the first full season for the huts.

These arrangements are another issue that has filled column inches in recent weeks, and one where, as is often the case, the truth of the matter is far less exciting than the fiction peddled by some.

In short, after the first year's results were reviewed we had an open debate within the council about how we could get as many people as possible enjoying the huts, and ensure they covered their running costs.

After discussing this at cabinet and scrutiny meetings we have taken the decision to continue to manage the huts in-house, and are looking forward to seeing even more people enjoying them during this summer season.

Our ongoing work to attract more visitors to our resorts is one of the many ways in which the council works to help businesses in the Vale. This month I was lucky enough to go and see the results of another.

Our Creative Rural Communities team, with the financial support of the Waterloo Foundation, has for the last two years provided bursaries to local entrepreneurs looking to set up new enterprises in the Vale. In this time the 'Inspiring the Vale' bursary scheme has helped dozens of new businesses get off the ground; one of whom is Chloe, the own er of Cobbles Kitchen and Deli in Ogmore-by-Sea.

Cobbles Kitchen has been running for three months. Judging by the number of people turning up for breakfast on the cold March morning when I visited, it is clear that she is doing well. The bursary has helped Chloe with equipment costs, rent, and marketing, and her business is growing rapidly, with plans of expansion on the horizon.

It is rewarding to see that with just a little help and guidance, new businesses in the Vale can support themselves and become sustainable.

I'd like to close this month's column with a mention of a development that will bring benefits to businesses of all sizes across the county. On March 15, I signed the 'Heads of Terms' agreement for the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal for the Vale of Glamorgan.

My cabinet colleague Coun Lis Burnett and I had negotiated hard to ensure that the Vale will share fully in the benefits of the deal and that the Vale continues to be centre stage in the growth of south east Wales as a region.

Now that the initial process of the deal has been agreed and signed, we are both looking forward to working equally hard to make sure that this huge investment has a real impact on the lives of people in the Vale.

PICTURED: (left to right), CAVC deputy principal Kay Martin; CAVC chair of governors Geraint Evans; Jane Hutt AM; CAVC head of auto, Richard Clayden; Aston Martin head of HR Hazel Martin, CAVC principal and chief executive Mike James; CAVC vice principal Mary Kent.

Aston Martin meets future employees

AS Aston Martin prepares its new base in St Athan, Vale AM Jane Hutt and the company's head of HR, Hazel Martin, recently met young people who may help form the workforce needed to create its new crossover vehicle.

They visited Cardiff and Vale College's brand new, state of the art automotive training centre. During the visit they were taken on a tour of the new facility and spoke to students and apprentices about their training, aspirations and the opportunities that Aston Martin could offer.

Aston Martin recently unveiled plans for its new manufacturing facility in St Athan – a manufacturing facility housed across three super-hangars - creating 750 highly skilled jobs and a wealth of wider benefits for the economy of the Vale and the wider region.

Aston Martin held its first recruitment event for the new base at the College's International Centre for Aerospace Training (ICAT) at Cardiff Airport yesterday (March 30).

Jane Hutt said: "We know we have a fantastic base of talented skilled people and the visit today has been a great opportunity to demonstrate this – speaking with students and apprentices at Cardiff and Vale College."

Hazel Martin said: "A career at Aston Martin means joining one of the world's most respected luxury automotive brands at a time when we have ambitious plans for global growth. There are opportunities available now in a variety of business areas. We are looking to inspire and employ the most talented people to be part of the future development of Aston Martin."

Mike James, principal and chief executive of Cardiff and Vale College said: "Having Aston Martin as a key employer for our region will be a huge boost to this priority sector and for the individuals and communities in our region.

"It will provide fantastic job opportunities for our students and we look forward to supporting a future talent pipeline for this aspirational UK company."

LOCAL SCOUT TROOP VISIT THE ST ATHAN RESCUE HELICOPTER BASE

MEMBERS of the Vale Explorer Scout Unit took part in a visit to the Bristow Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopter base at St Athan Business Park recently.

They were shown the two Agusta Westland helicopters, both of which are fitted with night vision and state-of-the art medical equipment.

The 26-strong troop received a guided tour from some of the crew at the St Athan base – Martin Hawkes, avionic engineer, Mike Ratcliffe, apprentice engineer and Sam Ware, Duty Captain.

Martin said: "It was a great pleasure to have the Vale Explorer Scout Unit visit us here at our St Athan base. The Scouts were an enthusiastic group, keen to learn more about our work on the base. They asked lots of great questions about our taskings and had the opportunity to talk to other members of our SAR crew, including the Chief Pilot."

The base is home to two state-of-the-art SAR helicopters, operated by Bristow Helicopters Ltd, their crew and support team.

The base became fully operational last year when Bristow Helicopters Ltd took over delivery of helicopter Search and Rescue services throughout the UK on behalf of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

Regional AM slams Vale merger proposal

LOCAL residents are overwhelmingly against Welsh Government plans to abolish the Vale and merge with Cardiff, fearing that it would result in the area being ignored even more, said regional AM Andrew RT Davies.

That was the verdict of those who attended his surgery at the Duke of Wellington in Cowbridge on March 22, said Mr Davies.

He organised the event to let residents have their say on a variety of local and national issues, and the merger was by far the number one topic of conversation.

Mr Davies said:"I was delighted that so many people turned out at my surgery to express these views and it was very good of the Duke of Wellington to allow me to use it as a venue. The plans to abolish the Vale will be disastrous and it is vital that they are stopped."

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL
CYNGOR BRO MORGANNWG

Delay to Council Tax payments

Oedi i Gasglu Taliadau Treth y Cyngor

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is advising residents that some Council Tax payments will be collected later than usual in April.

Mae Cyngor Bro Morgannwg yn hysbysu trigolion y bydd rhai taliadau Treth y Cyngor yn cael eu casglu'n hwyrach nag arfer ym mis Ebrill.

Those residents who pay their Council Tax by direct debit on the first day of each month will have their payment collected eight days later than usual on the 9th of April. No other payments will be affected.

Bydd taliad y trigolion rheiny sy'n talu Treth y Cyngor drwy ddebyd uniongyrchol ar ddiwrnod cyntaf y mis yn cael ei gasglu wyth diwrnod yn hwyrach nag arfer, ar 9 Ebrill. Ni fydd yn hyn yn cael effaith ar unrhyw daliadau eraill.

The delay in collecting payments is due to the late notification of the final Welsh Government budget settlement for the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the knock-on effect this had on setting Council Tax bills for 2016/17.

Y rheswm am yr oedi yw y daeth yr hysbysiad o ffigwr terfynol cyllideb Llywodraeth Cymru i Gyngor Bro Morgannwg yn hwyr yn y dydd, ac mi effeithiodd hyn yn ei dro ar y broses o bennu symiau biliau Treth y Cyngor ar gyfer 2016/17.

From May 2016 all direct debit payments will be taken as usual.

Bydd taliadau debyd uniongyrchol yn cael eu casglu fel arfer o fis Mai 2016 ymlaen.

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Beach clean-up near Aberthaw

FOURTEEN volunteers spent two hours picking up rubbish and plastic waste on East Aberthaw beach.

Organised by Aberthaw power station and supported by Keep Wales Tidy and the Wildlife Trust, volunteers swept the beach for plastic litter, most of which floats into the shore with the daily tides.

"It was an amazing amount collected in a short space of time," said Amy Lavisher, environmental compliance engineer at the power station. "Marine animals and birds can be fatally harmed by the litter and it is an ongoing problem to keep the beach clean."

The beach adjoins East Aberthaw nature reserve, owned and managed by the power station.

The site will be holding a series of accompanied walks throughout the year on the third Monday of every month between April, May, June, July and September – to introduce local residents and nature lovers to the wonders of the site's unique ecology.

The first walk will take place on May 16 at 6pm from the bottom of Well Road, East Aberthaw. For more information, contact Rachel on 07753 650 964.

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Vale AM meets Minister in support of BAMC

IN recent weeks, Vale AM Jane Hutt, has been clarifying issues at BAMC (British Airways Maintenance Centre) which are of great concern to the workforce.

She understands that BAMC has proposals affecting the company's skilled and loyal workforce involving jobs, terms and conditions which are the subject of negotiations with Unite the union, their workforce representatives and management.

She has attended meetings with the workforce and pledged her support for BAMC which plays a vital role in the aerospace industry in south Wales in support of British Airways.

At a meeting with the Minister Edwina Hart, she raised questions about the scale and level of support for BAMC by the Welsh Government and received assurances about the active engagement of the Welsh Government in support of the BAMC site in Rhoose, which is located in the St Athan enterprise zone.

She said: "The British Maintenance Airways Centre (BAMC) is a key employer in the Vale of Glamorgan playing a vital role in aircraft maintenance with a loyal, skilled workforce including apprentices.

"BAMC has been supported in many ways, over the years, by the Welsh Government and I met the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport to clarify and confirm ways in which we can engage in the current challenging situation."

A top level Welsh Government meeting has now been organised in London with IAG (BAMC).

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The winter workload is putting NHS services under more pressure

HEALTH services in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan saw a significant increase in demand during the winter period.

During the first 11 weeks of the year, attendances at the emergency unit (EU) at University Hospital of Wales rose by 8.5 per cent compared to last year with an extra 2,113 cases of people needing help.

Staff have also seen increasing numbers of seriously ill patients, and attendances at the EU on Fridays in January were on average 15 per cent higher compared to the same time last year, highlighting the unpredictability of demand.

There has also been increased demand in the community with GPs seeing more patients and the GP our of hours service seeing a large increase in calls.

Alice Casey, the chief operating officer for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, said: "There has been continuing extra demand placed on services during the winter period and staff have worked tremendously hard to provide care for those who need it.

"We know there will have been people who have waited longer than we would like at times, and we apologise for any delays while we have had to manage this increase and prioritise those most in need of our help.

"We would like to remind patients who have non-urgent care needs to choose well and consider other healthcare provisions available to them, including pharmacists, optometrists, GPs and NHS Direct Wales."

The Primary Care out of hours service has seen a seven per cent increase in its workload, receiving nearly 10,000 calls in February alone.

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English Speaking Union hears 'how China works'

AT the most recent lunch of the south Wales branch of the English Speaking Union, guest speaker Jonathan Fenby delivered a thought provoking talk on 'How China works: inside the rising superpower'.

With a background of senior editorial positions in Reuters, The Independent, Guardian and Observer, and as editor for many years at the South China Morning Post, Jonathan broadcasts regularly on the BBC, CNN and Bloomberg as well as conducting lecture tours in the UK, USA, Europe and East Asia.

The author of 16 books, eight of them on China, his talk combined specialist knowledge on China's politics, policies, economy and external relations with a more light-hearted insight into the impact of mobile phones and computer tablets on the pervasive power of the communist regime, and in exposing the widespread corruption in Chinese officialdom.

Proposing the vote of thanks, branch president Captain Sir Norman Lloyd-Edwards warmly praised both the content and delivery of the talk and, on behalf of members, invited Jonathan to return to speak at a future lunch.

As the author of several books on France, and a Knight of both the French Legion of Honour and the French National Order of Merit, branch members can look forward to another Jonathan Fenby masterclass on our nearest continental neighbour.

At the next lunch, on Tuesday, April 19 at the Cardiff City stadium, Professor Chandra Wickramasinghe will speak on 'Evidence of Life beyond Earth'. Further details from branch chairman Derek Morgan on 01656 669129 or email dwcaym@googlemail.com. **DM**

Jonathan Fenby, Lady Inkin, Anne Morgan, Derek Morgan.

Hunter Jarvie, Annie Cooke, Gloria Morgan and David Morgan.

Photos by Keith E Morgan.

ABOVE: *Kate Macphail, Michael Macphail, Peter Knapp, Josephine Knapp, Basil Watkins.*

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GEM readers show off their perfect pets

TO celebrate National Pet Month – April 1 to May 2 – The GEM has highlighted many GEM readers' much-loved pets. National Pet Month encourages responsible ownership.

Maria's German Shepherd, Zeus, taken in fields at Highlight Park.

Basil John from Llancarfan who smiles when asked!

Keri's cats, Bella and Missy.

Millie at agility doing what she loves.

Barney Leeke is a 16-week-old Bernese Mountain Dog walking in the grounds of Hensol Castle.

Mark's lovely cat Snowy.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cowbridge History Society

THE society's next lecture will be on Friday, April 1 at 7.30pm in the Lesser Hall of the Town Hall, Cowbridge. The subject will be 'Dyffryn and the Cory Family' by Gwerfyl Gardner.

All welcome! Please note: This is a change from the published programme.

Enfys craft fair

THE next Enfys craft fair will take place on Saturday, April 2 at St Ffransis Millennium Hall, Park Road, Barry. The fair is open from 1am until 4pm and entrance is free.

For more information contact Reg on 01446 792149, or Patricia on 01656 880784.

Barry library Easter activity

ON Monday, April 4 an Introduction to Coding is offered, from 1.30pm – 2.30pm; for children aged 9+, perfect for those brand new to coding. To book, follow the eventbrite links on the library's homepage.

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'GVS' JOINS AM IN CELEBRATING THE VALE'S VOLUNTEERS

GVS's Dish Out Dosh (a GwirVol funded youth-led grant panel) hosted a celebration of volunteering event and many individuals and local charities were invited along to the civic offices to be presented with their Millennium Volunteer and Star Award certificates by Jane Hutt AM.

These recognise the hours people put into volunteering and in making a difference to their community. The youth volunteering projects that Dish Out Dosh grants supported also showcased Cadoxton Youth Project's Christmas meal, Vale Homework Club, YMCA Gymnastics, Wick Youth Christmas and Scouts Climb Higher.

To find out more about what volunteering opportunities GVS has to offer, contact 01446 741706, e-mail: volunteering@gvs.wales, website: www.gvs.wales.

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Cosmeston's Easter visitors welcomed by new look cafe

EASTER visitors to the Lakeside Café at Cosmeston Country Park were welcomed by a bright new-look café.

The park, with its lakes and rural walks, is one of the Vale's busiest attractions at bank holidays.

In 2015, the Vale Council awarded Caterleisure Group the contract at the park. With a major investment, the Lakeside Coffee Shop has seen a serious makeover. The Vale Council has also taken the opportunity to upgrade 'back of house' equipment.

Louise Hodgson of Caterleisure said feedback from customers had been very positive.

Caterleisure said the café manager, Caroline Stanton, and her team had worked extremely hard to ensure disruption was kept to a minimum and look forward to welcoming back customers, new and old.

The new look cafe at Cosmeston.

Ty Hafan lottery winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D934.

- **£2,000:** 178524.
- **The rollover, which now stands at £3,000 was not not won this week.**
- **£10:** 562935, 742806, 498927, 981580, 960078, 562999, 974097, 243176, 281086, 517766, 871102, 592049, 205999, 325362, 477520, 246904, 406823, 650176, 998832.
- **£5:** 265896, 483916, 216513, 291996, 437613, 867865, 782485, 107621, 333529, 747831, 417601, 106100, 858448, 430112, 582670, 623078, 609082, 464142, 161290, 184045, 962804, 139936, 288587, 901579, 278927, 227599, 337701, 218304, 968144, 670686, 670989, 293778, 364713, 935747, 549225, 262166, 659251, 818295, 199415, 834459, 524306, 884506, 194973, 341332, 825096, 322175, 396799, 760178, 126298, 380830, 782565, 582688, 742914, 899972, 522700, 591936, 284699, 000224, 1984519, 1985077, 005594.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please telephone 029 2053 2300.

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Superhero smackdown is a mixed bag...

2016 is the year of the superhero smackdown. Next month sees *Captain America* and *Iron Man* entering civil war with each other as Marvel continues its grip on the minds (and wallets) of the cinema-going public, but first sees DC Comics' finest go head-to-head in *Batman vs Superman: Dawn of Justice*.

Following on from events of 2013's *Man of Steel*, the world is a very different place. The arrival of Superman (Henry Cavill) has split people, some of whom view him as a saviour, some of whom view him as a threat. In the latter camp is Bruce Wayne (Ben Affleck), whose distrust and concern means dusting down the cape and cowl of Batman to battle Superman. In the middle of all this is billionaire businessman (and shady character) Lex Luthor who has his own agenda regarding Superman – and who is determined to stop him by any means necessary...

When two such iconic characters meet on the big screen, it is difficult to manage the hype. This confrontation between Batman and Superman has been many years in the making, and the end product is somewhat of a mixed bag of a film, plenty of good stuff, some bad stuff, but all in all a film that captivates even if its portentous, dark tone may not be quite what audiences are after.

The biggest concern, from the internet fans who know all, was the casting of Ben Affleck as Batman, and ironically, the least concerning thing here is his performance. While the character is drawn a little too right-wing, it doesn't overly impact on a performance that may be the most loyal and accurate interpretation of the comic-book character on the big screen.

As Bruce Wayne Affleck plays the weariness of a man beaten down by 20 years of crime fighting (aided and abetted by the wonderfully droll Jeremy Irons as Alfred), as Batman he shows a cruel, brutal streak that evokes Frank Miller's interpretation of the character in *The Dark Knight Returns*.

Henry Cavill tries his best as Superman, but for the second film in a row he is undone by poor storytelling choices and the way the character is written; you never really engage in the character no matter how hard Cavill tries.

He is further put in the shade by Gal Gadot's extended cameo as Wonder Woman, whose dynamism and presence makes her a pleasant little surprise in the grand scheme of things.

While Amy Adams is undone by her

by GARETH JAMIESON
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character's ability to interject herself into trouble and do little else, Jesse Eisenberg as the dangerous and duplicitous Lex Luthor is a delight; his plans may be a tad confusing and poorly told, but Eisenberg delights in the role, tackling it head-on and making him a thoroughly watchable villain.

The film's biggest issues lie in the story and direction. The story is far too complicated and messy, lacking the narrative incisiveness needed with such a dense plot, yet paradoxically leaving several points undeveloped or making little sense, most notably Luthor's plans which have no end game.

There is the building of a DC universe similar to the Marvel one within the film, but while the latter was done slowly and over several films, here there is far too much to cram in, with several nods to the larger universe inserted with little finesse.

Finesse is also lacking in Zack Snyder's direction, the director's visual sense prevalent here but also, unchecked, becomes something far too overblown and OTT.

There are moments that are executed with real style, such as the titular fight, but all too often it slips into a CGI mess, the final overcooked sequence so ridiculous that it would give Michael Bay a migraine.

Snyder also makes some strange editing choices, with every scene in the opening half-hour fading to black, while a stunning dream sequence of a dystopian future is undone by the director's inability to highlight that it is a dream sequence and not just part of the story itself.

It's a film that manages to be both sublime and ridiculous – when it's good, it's good – and when it's messy, it's really messy; but it's also a film that is grandiose and mines the comic book foundations for all it is worth. While *Dawn of Justice* may lack subtlety and humour, its drama and weight makes it a far meatier proposition than many films of this genre – and that's no bad thing.

VERDICT: For all its shortcomings, *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* is a comic-book movie in its purest form, wearing its influence on its sleeve. It's nowhere near perfect, plot holes and Zack Snyder's overly-stylised direction seeing to that, but there is plenty here – Ben Affleck's superb turn, Gal Gadot's Wonder Woman and the sense of a universe being built – that makes it worthwhile. *Enjoyable*.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: *Man of Steel* (2013), *300* (2006).

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Art Central exhibition

ABOVE: 'Seekers' by Bernetta O'Connor.

THE Women's Arts Association Wales exhibition celebrated International Women's Day with a grand opening on March 12 at the Arts Central Gallery Barry, opened by Jane Hutt AM.

With an exciting mixture of work on display, the first creation to sell was a topical sculpture entitled 'Seekers' by Vernetta O'Connor. This artwork, constructed from driftwood and ceramic, represented a boat of refugees fleeing from a war zone to seek a new life in other lands.

The exhibition continues until April 16.

SHADOWS CLUB

ON April 12, The Conservative Club, Stanwell Road in Penarth (029 2030 9979) will host the South Wales Shadows Club: play – bring your guitar, (use our PA etc) or just listen. Licensed bar, from 8pm. All are welcome.

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Roller dance awards are presented by MP

ON March 20, Vale MP Alan Cairns' first public duty as Secretary Of State for Wales was to present cups, certificates and awards to successful skaters at the Glamorgan Artistic Roller Dance presentation.

There were 12 skaters awarded with their certificates for gaining Grade 1, six awarded Grade 2 and one for Grade 3.

A trophy for being the most successful sponsored skater was given to Ruby Lang, who was also awarded the trophy for the most improved skater of the year, chosen by head coach Sheilah Davies.

Skaters of the month award was given to two skaters Emily Parsons and Chloe Bates, and the most enthusiastic member, Maci Connell, also received a trophy.

The award of federation test passed for dance went to Ewan Maxwell, Medi Western, Phoebe Escott, Michael Vaughan and Bethan Daly at elementary level. At preliminary level, Phoebe Escott and Kaitlin Daly were also awarded certificates and medals.

Demonstrations were given to show the progression of different levels of skating with Ruby Land and Gabrella Kenefic, then Phoebe Escott and Medi Western.

Bethan Daly and Michael Vaughan skated as a couple doing a Canasta Tango, while Kaitlin Daly and Ewan Maxwell danced a Denver Shuffle.

Free Dancing was executed by little Erin Maxwell, Bethan Daly gave her exhibition to a Michael Buble number, followed by Maya Archampong skating to Pink Panther. The audience reacted to these with loud applause, and we were then treated to Kaitlin Daly doing a lovely Foxtrot.

There was a gift, and thanks to Sarah Archampong because she drives when we have to travel long distances to various competitions with never a complaint! Thanks also to head coach Sheilah Davies and her assistants Hilary Cridge, Anne-Marie Escott, Liz Vaughan, Amy Goodwin and Donna Daly.

The group trains in Colcot Sports Hall, Tuesdays 6pm-7pm or can be followed on Facebook.

DD

Soroptimists and Rainbow group at the Senedd

LAST week, Jane Hutt AM welcomed fellow members of the Barry and District Soroptimists Group (voluntary organisation for professional and business women) and the Rainbow Group (a charity encouraging ethnic minority women to participate in the community), for a joint tour of the Senedd with tea and Welsh cakes.

Forum hears story of water activities centre

THE talk at last week's Barry Men's Forum given by the Ocean Watersports Trust secretary, was about the development of the Water Activities Centre at No 1 Dock, on the Mole which is situated in the centre of the dock.

The talk started with the setting up of a three man steering committee in 2013, which resulted in the Ocean Watersports Trust being registered as a charitable trust in July 2014.

Since then the site has been developed with a slipway and pontoon allowing easy access to the abandoned 78 acres of dock waters, together with boat parking, car parking and temporary accommodation now nearing completion.

A ramp allows wheelchair access to the Mole cabin, fitted out with male and female changing rooms and toilets, a wet room and wc for the disabled, with a small kitchen and storeroom.

The training room allows for meetings and gym activities when the weather is inclement.

He highlighted the number of organisations already signed up to use the facilities during the coming spring and summer season, and reported that 22 different clubs and groups were registered to undertake boating on the dock waters.

The ultimate aim of the centre is to construct an iconic building to provide function and meeting rooms for the whole community, including land-based activities, which together with a café will be a hub which should attract many.

The next meeting is on April 7, when Mr Geoff Jones will be talking about the 80th anniversary of the DC3

New members are very welcome, at £2 per meeting which includes light refreshments; meetings start at 10.15am and finish by noon. The Barry Men's Forum meets at the Trinity Presbyterian Church Hall, every Thursday morning. For further information, contact the chairman Peter Westcott on 02920 594881.

PMW

Welsh Assembly candidates face rural question time

THE Glamorgan branch of the Farmers' Union of Wales is giving members and friends of the union the chance to question Welsh Assembly election candidates about the future of the rural industry.

The event will take place on Wednesday 6 April at 7.30pm at St Mary's Hotel, Pencoed, Bridgend (CF35 5EA) and will focus on the agricultural industry and rural communities.

FUW Glamorgan county executive officer Rachel Saunders said: "It will be an ideal opportunity to listen to what the candidates for all parties have to offer the rural constituency in this area and to agriculture in general.

"We believe it's essential for electors to have the chance to ask questions to the candidates, as well as to listen to their views and opinions.

"It is essential that members of the Welsh Assembly and those in power after the May 5 election recognise the importance of supporting our industry."

Candidates from Labour, Conservative, Plaid Cymru, Liberal Democrats and UKIP have been invited to attend the assembly election hustings. For further information, contact the FUW Glamorgan office on 01446 774838.

Law firm signs Lithuanian deal to recover €2 million

SOUTH Wales-based CJCH Solicitors are teaming up with the European Law Firm of the Year to track down Lithuanian citizens in the UK and recover up to €2 million which courts have ordered them to pay.

Fast-growing CJCH, whose headquarters are in Cardiff, has signed a contract with Lithuanian firm Sorainen, recently named European Law Firm of the Year in the Lawyer European Awards, to jointly represent the interests of one of their Lithuanian clients to trace and identify the whereabouts and assets of up to 200 Lithuanian individuals in the UK.

CJCH, which also has offices in Barry and Bridgend, will use their specialist asset recovery and enforcement team to investigate each claim and identify the whereabouts of the individual against whom a Lithuanian court has already made judgement. They will then proceed through the UK courts system to enforce the court's ruling and recover assets.

CJCH Solicitors senior partner Stephen Clarke said: "This is a fantastic endorsement of our expertise in this field. Sorainen approached us to work with them on this because of our reputation, which is a real credit to our staff.

"It is a three-year contract and we anticipate the total amount of recovery could exceed €2 million."

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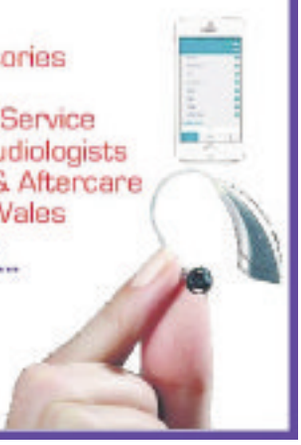

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Application No:/ Rhif y cais:	2016/00210/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig:	Detached single storey garage
Location:/Lleoliad:	Llaneinydd, School Lane, St. Nicholas
Conservation Area:/ Ardal Gadwraeth	St. Nicholas

Departure from Development Plan/ Gwyro o'r Cynllun Datblygu

Application No:Rhif y cais:	2015/01228/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig:	Demolition of existing buildings and residential redevelopment of land to deliver 15 affordable homes together with associated car parking, landscaping, drainage infrastructure and other ancillary development
Location:/Lleoliad:	Land at Former Bus Depot Site, Chapel Terrace, Twyn Yr Odyn, Wenvoe

Application(s) with Environmental Statement/ Cais (au) gyda Datganiad Amgylcheddol

NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 8
Proposed development at Land adjacent A4226, Five Mile Lane, Barry.

I give notice that Vale of Glamorgan Council, is applying to The Vale of Glamorgan Council for Planning Permission to Proposal is for on line improvements to the existing A4226 between Waycock Cross Roundabout in Barry and the lay-by to the north of the Welsh Hawking Centre and an off line new road provision to the east of the existing A4226 which will reconnect with the existing A4226 just to the south of Blackland Farm.

The proposal has been submitted with an environmental statement which can be inspected at the address given below. Members of the public may obtain copies of the environmental statement at a charge of £150.00 (paper copy), £10.00 (CD/DVD copy), or the Non-Technical Summary free of charge from Support Services, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Dock Office, Barry Docks, Barry CF63 4RT, so long as stocks last.

Members of the public may inspect copies of:

- The application.
- The plans.
- The environmental statement.
- Other documents submitted with the application.

at the address given below during all reasonable hours until 21 April, 2016.

Anyone who wishes to make representations about this application should write to the Head of Planning and Transportation at the address given below by 21 April 2016 quoting reference 2016/00305/RG3.

HYSBYSIAD O DAN ERTHYGL 8
Datblygiad arfaethedig yn Land adjacent A4226, Five Mile Lane, Barry

Hysbysir trwy hyn Vale of Glamorgan Council, n gwneud cais i Gyngor Bro Morgannwg am Ganiatâd Cynllunio ar gyfe Proposal is for on line improvements to the existing A4226 between Waycock Cross Roundabout in Barry and the lay-by to the north of the Welsh Hawking Centre and an off line new road provision to the east of the existing A4226 which will reconnect with the existing A4226 just to the south of Blackland Farm

Cafodd y cynnig ei gyflwyno gyda datganiad amgylcheddol sydd ar gael i'w ddarllen yn y cyfeiriad isod. Gall aelodau o'r cyhoedd gael copïau o'r datganiad amgylcheddol am gost o £150.00 (copi papur), £10.00 (CD gopi / DVD), neu'r Crynodeb Annhechnegol am ddim gan Wasanaethau Cymorth, Cyngor Bro Morgannwg, Doc Swyddfa, Dociau'r Barri, Y Barri CF63 4RT, cyhyd ag y stoc yn parhau.

Caiff aelodau o'r cyhoedd hefyd ddarllen copïau o'r:

- cais;
- cynlluniau;
- datganiad amgylcheddol;
- dogfennau eraill a gyflwynwyd gyda'r cais,

yn y cyfeiriad isod yn ystod oriau rhesymau tan 21 Ebrill, 2016.

Dylai unrhyw un sydd am wneud sylwadau ar y cais ysgrifennu at Bennaeth Cynllunio a Chludiant y cyngor (gwelwch y dudalen ar waelod y dudalen) erbyn 21 Ebrilll 2016 an ddyfynnu'r cyfeirnod 2016/00305/RG3.

Details may be inspected for 21 days at the address given below, or via **http://vogonline.planning-register.co.uk/**

Gall manylion eu harchwilio am 21 diwrnod yn y cyfeiriad a roddir isod, neu drwy **http://vogonline.planning-register.co.uk/**

Dated / Dyddiedig: 31 March, 2016

V. L. Robinson
Operational Manager,
Regeneration and Planning,
Vale of Glamorgan Council,
Dock Office, Barry. CF63 4RT

Time is chipping away for Wales' dog owners...

WITH dog microchipping legislation coming into effect soon, Dogs Trust, the UK's largest dog welfare charity, is urging Welsh dog owners to ensure their pets are chipped and that their contact details on the microchip database are up-to-date.

Official figures reveal that 31 per cent of dogs in Wales are still not chipped.

The microchipping laws dictate that from April 6, any dog owners who do not microchip their pets within 21 days of being served notice will be liable to pay a fine of up to £500.

Microchipping is an essential part of responsible dog ownership and the most effective permanent way of ensuring a lost dog is returned to their owner.

In 2015 alone, 11 per cent of stray dogs in Wales were reunited with their owners thanks to a chip. The chip itself lasts a lifetime, however, owners must ensure their address details are updated after every house move so that the data is current.

Dogs Trust offers free microchipping appointments across all of its 21 Rehoming Centres around the country. Most recently, the charity launched a nationwide tour, led by their three metre high dog mascot, Dogcilla, hosting free microchipping roadshows and events.

In total Dogcilla travelled the equivalent of the Earth's circumference 5.8 times in her quest to get dogs across the UK chipped before the impending legal change.

Adrian Burder, CEO of Dogs Trust said: "For many years, Dogs Trust has campaigned to bring about the introduction of compulsory microchipping and registration. Therefore, we are very pleased to welcome the legislation, which will go a long way to improving dog welfare. Losing a dog is an extremely upsetting time for both dog and owner so we urge the public to check their pets are chipped and address details are up to date before April 6.

"To date, Dogs Trust has microchipped nearly a million dogs and we're still working tirelessly to ensure as many dogs as possible are given these essential pieces of technology before compulsory microchipping comes into force."

To find out more information on microchip databases and how to update a microchip, please visit www.chipmydog.org.uk/update-your-dogs-chip.

Seven rabbits abandoned on Easter Sunday

RSPCA Cymru is appealing for information after seven rabbits – believed to have been dumped – were found at Duffryn Gardens in the Vale.

One of the abandoned rabbits.

RSPCA deputy chief inspector Gemma Black was called to the rescue on Easter Sunday (March 27) after seven rabbits were found running loose in the gardens.

"I couldn't believe it when I received the call on Easter Sunday," she said. "It seemed far too topical and I wondered at first if this could be an Easter prank.

"They are seven lovely rabbits that sadly appear to have been dumped in the grounds near the back entrance. There are country lanes nearby and there aren't really houses where they could have escaped from."

The rabbits have all been given chocolate-y nicknames – Fudge, Toffee, Caramel, Button, Truffle, Coco and Sugar – and were taken to a veterinary surgery for a check up. The five male and two female rabbits, are aged around five months and had not been neutered.

The rabbits are now in RSPCA care and are doing well.

"Anyone who may have information about these rabbits should contact the RSPCA inspectorate appeal line on 0300 123 8018. Calls are treated in confidence," deputy chief Black added.

"If we are unable to track down the owner, the rabbits will be rehomed."

The RSPCA discourages people from buying rabbits on impulse as Easter presents. Every year, more than a thousand rabbits are abandoned and are taken into RSPCA care.

"We would encourage anyone looking to give a pet a home to go a rescue centre and chose a pet which is best suited to their lifestyle," she added.

For more information about how to keep rabbits happy and healthy, visit the website http://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/rabbits.

'The Chronicle is an insult to journalism'

THE letter from Mr Viv Kelly in The GEM dated March 24 neatly summarises the thoughts of so many people regarding the 'newspaper' The Glamorgan Chronicle.

The publication is insulting to professional journalism. It even claims 'an exclusive' for a piece of information which nobody else would bother to publish.

The problem is not so much that a lot of the statements and claims made are of dubious veracity; it is that the authors believe that the public will swallow what they read. It also reveals to what extent the electorate is held in contempt.

The following old political quotation is appropriate: you can fool some of the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all of the time.

George Haynes,
Cowbridge.

Iconic bandstand gets a summer makeover

THE Victoria Park bandstand in Cadoxton is receiving a renovation makeover in time for the summer.

Over the last couple of years the ceiling, bargeboards and soffits have shown signs of water damage and some rot. The Vale Council has commissioned restoration work on the iconic bandstand in order to get it ready for a great season of events this summer.

Local craftsmen and carpenters from Woodspec Joinery Specialists are currently carrying out the repairs on the bandstand. This includes custom made stainless covers and rain channels to help prevent leaking on the upper tier. Larger drainage pipes and renovated gutters will ensure that water flows away from the roof.

Cabinet member for visible and leisure services, Coun Gwyn John, said: "With the old ceiling removed and work well underway sealing the upper tier, we are looking forward to seeing the finished result. Since the Bandstand was rebuilt in Victoria Park it has become a much loved landmark, and stage for some superb events and music concerts. It's the centrepiece of the Cadstock Music Festival every year.

"This work will make sure that the bandstand will last for many years to come and will be ready for upcoming events, including African drumming, two brass band concerts, several fun-days and of course the Cadstock Festival."

'Pop-up choir' is active again

VALE VOICES is a mixed 'pop up' choir which has been running in Barry for the past six years.

Its aim is to introduce new voices to choral singing in an environment where experienced singers can also feel at home and be encouraging.

The 30-strong choir has members from age 11 to 80 and meets for 12 weeks each year. The Vale Voices season culminates in a concert which this year will be on Friday, June 24 in St Helens Church, Barry.

Rehearsals will be on Mondays 6pm-7pm in Trinity Church upper hall, starting on April 4.

Members fresh-faced and well-seasoned will be warmly welcomed to sing a repertoire including 'Penny Lane', 'Vivaldi Gloria' and the rousing 'Do you Hear the People Sing', which will also be the title of this year's concert.

For more details, contact 07982 319456 or find Vale Voices on FaceBook.

Grass cutting team is ready for action

The Vale Council's award-winning parks team is ready for a new way of working and another busy summer of grass cutting.

To improve the way in which many of the Vale's green spaces are managed a number of changes have been made to the grass cutting routine for 2016. This year will see a trialling of longer grass 'collars' being left around some trees to prevent damage from strimmers along with a number of other measures to develop a more sustainable natural environment for the county.

Vale residents may also notice that the team will be using a new type ride-on mower for the first time that will speed up grass cutting in many areas that were previously only accessible to hand mowers, a measure that will reduce both cost and the disruption of maintenance to green spaces.

PACT meetings

***BUTTRILLS PACT** at Barry Town Council Offices, Gladstone Road, Barry, on Thursday, April 14 at 6.30pm.*

***RHOOSE** coffee and chat will be held at the Fontygary Inn, Rhoose, on Thursday, March 31 at 11am.*

Follow The GEM on Twitter - find us @gem_news

ISLAND PROVES AN IDEAL LOCATION FOR SPORTS RELIEF CHARITY MILE

PHOTOGRAPHS by ANDY WICKS
Telephone 07855 374478

THE Sports Relief Charity Mile was held at Barry Island recently and people of all generations were keen to take part and raise funds for a great cause.

Of the money raised by the public through Sport Relief, 50 per cent makes a difference in the UK, and 50 per cent goes towards transforming lives across the world's poorest communities. For more information, or to donate, go to: http://www.sportrelief.com/.

LEFT AND RIGHT:

As you can see from Andy Wicks' images of the day, it proved a great family event – with some four legged friends attending as well!

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MAES SLOWES LEYES, RHOOSE
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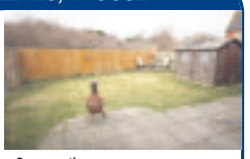


- Spacious detached property
- 4 bedrooms
- 2 reception rooms
- Gardens & garage

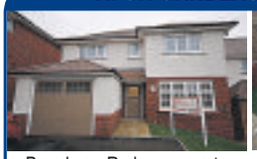
£240,000

LIVINGSTONE WAY, ST ATHAN
NEW

- Spacious end of terrace property
- 4 bedrooms
- 2 reception rooms
- No chain

£108,000

AFON GARDENS, BRYNMENYN



- Brand new Redrow property
- 4 bedroom detached
- Quality kitchen
- Last remaining plot

£234,995

CAPEL CARIAD, COLWINSTON
SOLD

- Converted chapel
- 4 bed detached
- 3 reception rooms
- Backing onto farmland

£525,000

MACKWORTH STREET, BRIDGEND
SOLD

- Mid-terrace property
- 3 bedrooms
- Private garden to rear
- On street parking

£105,000

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Sales

BADGERS BROOK CLOSE, YSTRADOWEN

- 3 bed semi
- No chain
- New carpets
- Driveway & garden

£250,000

PENYLAN COURT, ST BRIDES MAJOR

- 4 bed detached property
- 3 reception rooms
- Detached garage
- Rear garden with open views

£400,000

IVY COTTAGE, GILESTON

- Detached traditional cottage
- 2 double bedrooms
- Views across to Devon Coastline
- Garage and ample parking

£265,000

CEFN FARM, BRIDGEND
SOLD

- Detached character cottage
- 3 double bedrooms
- 4 acres of pasture land
- Stable block

£499,500

OLD RECTORY LANE, ST NICHOLAS
SOLD

- Standing in 1.07 acres
- 4 bedrooms
- 3 bathrooms
- Sought-after village

£735,000

LOCATION

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LOCATION

Cardiff

LOCATION

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MURCH BOWLING CLUB – Looking for a summer hobby?

Murch Bowling Club are holding an open day.

THIS is to all those ladies and gents who have ever wondered about taking up outdoor bowls, which is a fun, sociable sport.

We all know the importance of exercise and what could be pleasanter on a beautiful summer day than a couple of hours bowling with like-minded friends?

Our season re-commences in April 2016 so we would like to invite you to join us on opening day, Saturday, April 16 at 2pm to try your hand at bowling.

Bowls will be provided, just wear flat soled shoes and you will be good to go.

We are situated at the end of Sunnycroft Lane, Dinas Powys.

You will meet some of our existing members who will be happy to discuss with you the merits of the game. It would also give you a chance to enjoy the excellent facilities in our clubhouse.

If you would like more information prior to April 16, feel free to contact the following members: Graham Russell (treasurer) 02920 513619; Eileen Carryer (secretary) 02920 515568; Maurice Warman (men's secretary) 02920 512575.

On and Off the Turf with Brian Lee

BROTHERS Evan and Tom David from Llanharan both rode winners at the Easter Monday South Pembrokeshire Hunt Point-To-Point Steeplechases at sunny Lydstep.

Twenty-three-year-old Evan landed the opening members race and 25 year-old Tom took the closing restricted race.

Evan, riding the Robert Luke trained Full Print, jumped the last fence ahead of the odds-on favourite Harpsy Cord, ridden by Welsh champion John Mathais, and went on to score by three lengths.

Tom, riding Mrs Carmen Goldsworthy's Captain Camelot, finished six lengths ahead of Mathias's mount Shanks A Lot.

Captain Camelot, who had lost his maiden tag over the course last season, could be in the line-up for the Dunraven Bowl Novices Hunter Chase at Chepstow Racecourse on April 22.

Wales's most popular point-to-pointer David Llewellyn's 13-year-old bay gelding Rosies Peacock chalked-up his 31st win between-the-flags when winning the West Wales Area feature open race by one-and-a-half lengths from Tom David's mount BoyFromNoWhere.

Winning rider John Mathias said: "To be honest he was always on the bridle but that's Rosie - he always keeps pulling out more."

The homebred Rosies Peacock, who has also won a hunter-chase, at 13, was the oldest horse in the race and unlike a number of prolific winners often starts at odds-against as he did on Monday.

Long may this grand old warrior keep defying those odds. It has certainly been a privilege to report and write about this remarkable horse who has captured the imagination of hunt-racing enthusiasts throughout the land.

Mathias was also successful on the promising five-year-old Contstantine Bay, which won the young horse maiden race coming home five lengths ahead of the pacemaking Midnight Bliss.

Jodie Hughes, riding the Mickey Bowen trained Tony Star, won the ladies' open race by 12 lengths from Watch The Birdie who will surely improve after that run and Wayne Maskill rode a well-judged race to win the open maiden on 10-year-old Sandeel Bay, which got home by half-a-length from Mountain Of Angels.

BEN WINS OPEN PONY RACE

Ben Hughes, aged 14, from Gilfach Goch won the 148cms open pony race on Dark Magic beating Merthyr Mawr's Jack Tudor, aged 13, riding Poppy Haze.

This was Ben's first pony racing winner but he is a successful show jumper.

This Saturday, the Monmouthshire Hunt Point-To-Point will take place at Llanvapley near Abergavenny.

Club members shine at English championships

The team from JSTKD Martial Arts & Fitness enjoyed another good result during their visit to the recent English Tae Kwon Do Championships.

Despite having a much smaller team than usual, and with several members suffering from injuries, everyone made a magnificent effort to ensure that they returned home with trophies and medals from the day.

The team comprised Lynne Doel, Rhys Doel, Menna Burmingham, Dylan Sullivan, Alan Li, Chris Edwards, Josh Edwards, Niamh Padmore, Alisha Roberts and Viv Wilfred.

Regardless of an ongoing injury, Alan Li set about things at his usual blistering pace in the Cadet Middleweight Black Belt Sparring division.

Two of his unfortunate opponents found themselves seeking attention from the medics as he combined a range of merciless kicks with well-targeted punches on his way to the final.

This proved to be an extremely close-run affair and with just the narrowest of margins denying him the top spot, he eventually came away with the silver.

Over in the Boys Green Belt Tiny Tots Sparring division there was almost a miniature version of Alan's fight unfolding as Dylan Sullivan put in a terrific performance.

Demonstrating a variety of techniques, he too, saw the slimmest of victories go to his rival and had to be content with the silver.

Josh Edwards, Boys Lightweight Black Belt Sparring, showed great courage as he came up against a very aggressive and much larger opponent.

Although taking two hard kicks to his face and eye, he was determined not to give in and while going out in the earlier rounds, he did so commendably.

The girls were not to be outdone though, and both Niamh Padmore and Alisha Roberts fought well in their Girls Yellow Belt Lightweight matches.

Although neither reached the final, both put in very credible performances with Alisha going on later in the day to avenge herself in the tag team event by taking the gold medal alongside her teammates.

A mention must go to Rhys Doel, Boys Lightweight Black Belt, and Menna Burmingham, Girls Middleweight Black Belt, who both did well in their sparring and patterns events but just missed out on the medals.

For the adults, Chris Edwards, Mens Welterweight Red Belt Sparring, found himself in the same position as son Josh, getting a very harsh opponent in the first round.

Known for her consistent sparring record, Lynne Doel tried her skills in the Ladies Red Belt Patterns this time and although scoring highly, just lost out on the medal places.

Viv Wilfred, meanwhile, was sparring in the Executive Ladies Green Belt event. After a keenly contested battle, she had to settle for a well deserved bronze.

JSTKD has classes for all ages from three years to adults and welcomes beginners, returners or experienced students at their venues throughout the Vale - visit www.jstkd.co.uk for details.

VW

NEWS FROM THE BARRY CHESS CLUB

THERE have been no matches in the East Glamorgan Chess league but three different competitions held under the auspices of the Welsh Chess Union.

The first competition was the first Team Rapidplay. This tournament was designed to replace the Welsh Knock Out Cup as this latter event has been poorly attended in recent years.

However, deciding to play the tournament on the same day that Cardiff City were at home and the England v Wales 6 Nations rugby match was being screened live on television proved to be an error. Abergavenny were the only entrant in either section so the event was cancelled.

On the next day the fifth round of the Welsh Premier League took place. The Vale were drawn away to Nidum in this round.

We were unfortunately unable to field a full team. This meant that not only were we already a point down before the first moves were made but our players on the lower boards all had to move up and play stronger players than should have been the case.

In the end we lost 4-2 with the top three boards picking up our points. The best result came from Mike Servini with a draw against Nidum's Matthew Davies, a player who represents Barry in the East Glamorgan League.

The Vale remain in sixth place out of seven. Should we win our final two matches we could finish in third but we are more likely to be fighting to avoid the wooden spoon.

The main event at Easter is always the Welsh Championships.

In the Open Section the only Barry player was Nigel Ralphs, although he was joined by ex-Barry players Lee Davis and Joe Turner.

In the Major event Sam Jukes was our sole entrant; however in the Minor Event there were a number of Barry players.

Nigel was ranked to finish 10th out of 40 entrants in the Open Section. He made a solid start, picking up a win and four draws in the first five rounds.

However defeats in rounds six and seven left him with three points from seven games to finish in the top half - just.

Wins in round seven for Lee and Joe took them above Nigel for the first time in this year's tournament.

Details about the Major and Minor sections will be reported next week.

The Barry Chess Club meets at 7.30pm each Monday at the West End Club. St. Nicholas Road, Barry CF62 6QY.

The club is open to players of all standards; whether you are interested in playing competitive chess or just the occasional friendly games.

New players are very welcome to just turn up on the night but if you contact one of the club members through the website we can explain what is happening on the night you have in mind, and arrange for someone to greet you on your arrival.

For more details visit our website at http://barrychessclub.yolasite.com.

PJ

Half Ironman record broken in the Vale

THE Vale was home to a record breaking attempt on Thursday, March 24.

Pritchard's 100k Challenge is the charity fundraising, record-breaking attempt of Matthew Pritchard, the man behind the popular MTV series Dirty Sanchez. His challenge will see him attempt to complete 30 Half Ironman triathlons in 30 days across towns and cities throughout Wales.

That's a 1.2 mile swim, a 56 mile cycle and a 13.1 mile run every day for 30 days! Day 23 of his challenge saw him finish his 56 mile cycle around the Vale at Peter Alan's Barry branch, before donning his trainers to start his half marathon run.

What was particularly special about day 23 was that it would be the day that took him beyond the existing record and into the record books.

With some local runners for company, the run took in the Vale Council's newly-renovated Jenner Park stadium, where Matthew was welcomed by players and management of Barry Town FC and children from Jenner Park Primary School, who even joined him for a lap of the athletics track.

After leaving the stadium, his run took in Barry Island and the Knap before crossing the finish line in King Square, where he was congratulated by friends and the media.

Matthew said: "I'm over the moon to have broken the record and raised more money and awareness for our charities. I have still got another seven days to go until we reach our target, but knowing that we have broken the record will make it a little bit easier."

The charities benefiting from Pritchard's 100k Challenge are Guide Dogs, the Big Moose, Shelter Cymru, Ty Hafan and Friends of Greenhill. For more information and to donate, visit www.pritchards100kchallenge.com.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5:00PM 6 April 2016

Vale of Glamorgan Council | Hafod Housing Association | Newydd Housing Association | United Welsh | Wales and West Housing Association

homes4u HOTLINE 01446 709840

To apply call the hotline, e-mail us at
HOMES4U@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
or apply in writing to:
Vale of Glamorgan Council
Visible Services and Housing
Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry CF63 4RU or
Newydd Housing Association
121 Broad Street, Barry CF62 7AL

CRAWSHAY COURT, LLANTWIT MAJOR

H4U Reference 234156
Suit. for a single person or couple over 60 – no pets
- One-bedroom flat
- First floor (lift)
- Central heating
- Double-glazing
- Warden & community alarm

Rent £115.91 per week inc. water and alarm charges

CWRT MELIN Y RHOS, BARRY

Local lettings policy applies. Applicant must be over 40.

H4U Reference 1027709
Suit for a single person or couple not requiring level access shower – no pets
- One-bed ground floor flat
- Gas central heating
- Double-glazing
- Communal door/parking

Rent £88.12 per week including service charges

GRAYBURN HOUSE, BARRY

Local lettings policy applies

H4U Reference 127016
Suit for a single person or couple over 40 – no pets
- One-bedroom flat
- Third floor (lift)
- Gas central heating
- Double-glazing
- Communal door/parking

Rent £97.64 per week including service charges

HEOL Y LLONGAU, BARRY

Local lettings policy applies

H4U Reference 127028
Suit for a single person or couple over 40
- One-bedroom flat
- Second floor (no lift)
- Gas central heating
- Double-glazing
- Communal door/parking

Rent £85.93 per week including service charges

HOLTON ROAD, BARRY

H4U Reference 212720
Suitable for a single person or couple over 55
- One-bedroom bungalow
- Central heating
- Double-glazing
- Community alarm
- Gardens

Rent £102.89 per week inc. water and alarm charges

MERGANSER COURT, BARRY

H4U Reference 1010419
Suit for a single person or couple not requiring level access shower
- One-bedroom flat
- Ground floor
- Gas central heating
- Double-glazing

Rent £84.04 per week including service charges

PHILLIPA FREETH COURT, BARRY

H4U Reference 1066611
Suitable for a single person over 55 with a medical priority – no pets
- One-bed ground floor flat
- Level access shower
- Gas central heating
- Double-glazing

Rent £120.15 pw inc service water & heating charges

ST CANNAS GREEN, LLANGAN

H4U Reference 127030
Suit for a single person or couple with a local connection to Llangan
- One-bed first floor flat
- Gas central heating
- Double-glazing
- Communal garden/parking

Rent £95.82 per week including service charges

ST PAULS AVENUE, PENARTH

H4U Reference 245715
Suit. for a family meeting the maximum occupancy requirement – no pets
- Three-bed maisonette
- First floor
- Central heating
- Double-glazing
- Water meter

Rent £86.85 per week

STATION ROAD, RHOOSE

H4U Reference 247933
Suit. for a family meeting the maximum occupancy requirement – no pets
- Two-bed first floor flat
- Central heating
- Double-glazing
- Gardens

Rent £89.53 per week including water charges

TENSING TERRACE, BARRY

H4U Reference 225870
Suitable for a single person or couple over 55 – no pets
- One-bedroom flat
- Ground floor (steps)
- Central heating
- Double-glazing
- Community alarm

Rent £94.18 per week inc. water and alarm charges

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

OGMORE BY SEA

United Welsh Housing Association, with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, announces the new development at Ogmore by Sea.

Expressions of interest are invited from Homes4u members. Eligibility criteria apply.

- Ten, one-bedroom flats, five ground and five first floor
  Rent £78.64 per week with service charge to be confirmed.
- Ten, two bedroom houses
  Rent £99.61 per week with service charge to be confirmed.
- Two, three-bedroom houses
  Rent £101.26 per week with service charge to be confirmed.

The ground floor properties are not suitable for applicants who require level access shower facilities.

Newydd Housing Association, with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, announce the new development at Ocean View, Ogmore by Sea.

Expressions of interest are invited from Homes4u members. Eligibility criteria apply.

- Two, two-bedroom houses
  Rent £101.41 per week plus service charge
- Two, three-bedroom houses
  Rent £109.12 per week plus service charge
- Two, four-bedroom houses
  Rent £118.86 per week plus service charge

Visit the HOMES4U web page. www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

BURDONS CLOSE, WENVOE

Wales & West Housing Association, with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, announce the new development at Burdons Close, Wenvoe.

Expressions of interest are invited from Homes4U members with a local connection to Wenvoe as the local lettings policy applies.

- Two, four-bedroom houses
  Rent £123.67 per week
- Five, two-bedroom houses
  Rent £103.05 per week

Previous applicants may reapply. The local lettings policy applies.

CWRT DOCHDWY, LLANDOUGH

Hafod Housing Association, together with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, announce the development at Cwrt Dochdwy.

Expressions of interest are invited from Homes4u members. Eligibility criteria apply.

- Two, two-bedroom flats
  Rent 75.58 per week with service charge to be confirmed

CWRT COL-HUW, LLANTWIT MAJOR

Newydd Housing Association, with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, announce the new development at Cwrt Col-Huw.

Expressions of interest are invited from Homes4u members. Eligibility criteria apply. No pets.

- One, one-bedroom fully wheelchair accessible ground floor flat
  Rent £83.83 per week plus service charge
- One, two-bedroom ground floor flat with level access shower
  Rent £90.11 per week plus service charge
- One, two-bedroom flat
  Unsuitable for applicants with medical priority
  Rent to be advised

You must be a HOMES4U member to apply for any of these homes.
When bidding for more than one property you will be asked to state your order of preference.
All descriptions and other details are given in good faith and are believed to be correct but any potential tenant should satisfy themselves as to their correctness.
Newydd is a charitable housing association.

Boverton Brook, Llantwit Major
3 Beds. Kitchen/Diner.
Extended. Garage.
Show Home Standard.
£279,950 D56

Boverton Court, Llantwit Major
3 Beds. Attic Room.
Extended.
GCH Combi.
£195,000 tbc

St Johns View, St Athan
3 Beds. Extended.
Driveway.
Requires Work.
£174,950 D62

Chris Davies

Shakespeare Drive, Llantwit Major
3 Bedrooms
Enclosed Rear Garden
2 Allocated Parking Spaces
£139,950 D65

Higher End, St Athan
4 Beds. 2 Recps.
Southerly Rear. No Chain.
Double Garage & Driveway.
£262,950 D61

Llantwit Garden Close, St Athan
3 Beds.2 Recps.
GCH Combi. No Chain.
Corner Plot.
£154,950 C70

St Davids Crescent, St Athan
2 Bedrooms.
Southerly Rear.
No Chain. Parking.
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Rhoose 01446 711900
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Barry 01446 700007
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Windmill Lane, Llantwit Major
4 Beds. 2 Recps
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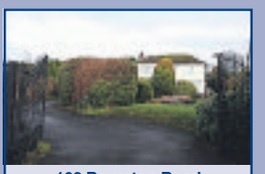
Sought After Location
£495,000 E53



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Higher End, St Athan
4 Beds. 2 Recps.
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£249,950 D57

Tyle House Close, Llanmaes
4 Beds. 2 Recps.
Driveway. Garage.
Sought After Village.
£349,950 C69

Ash Lane, St Athan
3 Bedrooms
Rarely Available
Potential to Extend
£154,950 D64

West End Terrace, Llantwit Major
2 Beds. Gardens.
2015 GCH Combi.
West End Location.
£199,950 C69

Byron Court, Llantwit Major
2 Bedrooms
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For the Elderly
£84,950 C76

Stag Lane, Llantwit Major
2 Bedrooms
West End Location
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£159,950 F23

Llantwit Road, St Athan
3 Beds. En-Suite.
Driveway. Kitchen/Diner.
Show Home Standard.
£239,950 B83

Tyle House Close, Llanmaes
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Driveway. Garage.
Sought After Village.
£265,000 D56

Pantycelyn Place, St Athan
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C73. Band C. £575 PCM

Llys Dwynwen, Llantwit Major
Two bed, Conservatory, GCH
C73. Band C. £575 PCM

Llwyn Y Gog, Rhoose Point
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C68. Band C. £650 PCM

Claude Road, Barry
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Three bedrooms
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£174,950 E51

Fitzhamon Avenue, Llantwit Major
3 Beds. 2 Recps.
GCH Combi. Extended.
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The number of local paid-for newspapers continues to decline. Here, we keep you up to date with the...

LATEST NEWSPAPER SALES FIGURES!

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Barry & District News	3,929	Paid 50p
Penarth Times	4,132	Paid 50p
South Wales Echo	21,036	Paid 65p
Western Mail	20,007	Paid 80p
Glamorgan Gazette	9,094	Paid 90p
Wales on Sunday	16,060	Paid £1.50

The GEM's weekly figure includes door to door delivery and numerous popular outlets from Penarth to Porthcawl

Latest *Data available*

That's why advertisers continue to enjoy a positive response from us - The GEM is 'Priceless'!

Remember - we distribute over 45,000 complimentary copies of **The GEM** throughout the Vale, Bridgend & Porthcawl every week – packed with all the content that makes a community newspaper really worth reading!

Source: www.abc.org.uk (April 2015)

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Family Notices

COLLINS
Patrick John (Paddy)

Suddenly at home on 14th March 2016, Paddy aged 77 years. Beloved husband of Bebe, much loved dad of Karen and Louise, father-in-law of Paul and a cherished grandad to Nia and Robyn.

Paddy will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.

Resting at A.G. Adams & Son until the funeral on Wednesday, 6th April in the chapel of rest at 10am, followed by interment at Barry Cemetery.

Family flowers only, donations in lieu if so desired, for Ty Hafan c/o the Funeral Director.

DEMPSEY-NIXON
Beryl

Died in the grace of God on March 9th, 2016.

Will be sadly missed by all her friends. May she rest in peace.

Requiem Mass to be held at St. Mary's R.C. Church, Dinas Powys on Tuesday, 5th April 2016 at 11am, thereafter to St. Andrew's Cemetery. All flowers and enquires to Green Willow Funerals, 21a Station Road, Dinas Powys, CF64 4DE. Tel (029) 2051 4627.

RAUCH
Colin

Suddenly on March 20 at Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend, Colin of St. Athan. Beloved husband of Pat, dearly loved father of Michele and Martin, much loved grampy of Hayden, Curtis, Will and Rebecca.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Monday, April 4, service and cremation 3pm at Cardiff and Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry. Family flowers only may be sent to the funeral home, donations in lieu, if desired, to Air Ambulance Wales c/o J James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhoose, Vale of Glamorgan, CF62 3DZ.

BARRY
Veronica Ann (Nee Parry)

Sadly on Monday, 21 March 2016 at her home in Treoes, Vale of Glamorgan, Veronica formerly of Albion Road, Baglan. Beloved wife of Ray, much loved mum of Samantha and the late Lisa. Cherished grandma of Will, Gwen, Megan and Grace. Dearly loved mother-in-law of Gareth and Simon.

Veronica will be greatly missed by all her family and friends.

Funeral service to be held on Wednesday, 6th April at St Catharine's Church, Baglan, Port Talbot at 11.10am, followed by cremation at Margam Crematorium at 12.30pm.

Family flowers only please, donations in memory of Veronica can be made to the Maggie's Centres, c/o Mr Thomas E. Morris, Gareth A. Jenkins Independent Funeral Directors of Baglan Funeral Home, Pentwyn Baglan Road, Port Talbot, SA12 8EB, telephone 01639 790333.

DONOVAN
Joan Anne

Peacefully on March 18th at the University Hospital of Wales with her brothers Terry and Roy at her side - Joan, well known for her time at F. W. Morgan and popular member of St Helens RC Church, Barry.

Joan will be dearly missed by all her family and many friends.

Resting at The Vale Funeral Service, 181 Court Road, Barry. Requiem Mass to take place at St Helens RC Church, Barry on Wednesday, 13th April at 12.30pm, followed by cremation at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry.

Family flowers only, donations if desired, may be made at her service or via Joan's online Tribute page at www.valefuneralservice.co.uk where you are also welcome to leave your personal tributes and messages.

Donations to support the work of Ty Hafan Children's Hospice For Wales.

Further enquiries to Lyndsay Ellis 01446 407962.

DUNNE
George

Peacefully after an illness bravely borne, George, loving husband of Liza, much loved dad and step-dad.

Will be sadly missed by all family and friends.

Funeral service at Coychurch Cremetorium on Friday, April 8th at 2.15pm. Donations in lieu of flowers to Velindre Cancer Care forwarded to Velindre Hospital, Velindre Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff.

GREENWAY
Jim (James) Joseph

Jim of Fryatt Street passed away peacefully on 21 March. Jim born in 1933 is sadly missed by his family, his loving wife Doreen, sons, daughter, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Funeral arrangements to follow.

HOPKINS
Audrey Patricia
(Formerly Brana) *(née Sidford)*

Peacefully on March 17th at Llandough Hospital after a very short illness, Audrey passed away with her daughters, Dawn and Tricia, at her bedside. Also much loved mum to Gail and Steven. Cherished nan & great nan to all her grandchildren.

Audrey will be greatly missed by all who loved and knew her.

Resting in the private chapel of the Vale Funeral Service, 181 Court Road, Barry until her service at Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery Chapel on Thursday, April 7th at 2pm, followed by interment.

Family floral tributes only - donations if desired may be made at the service to support The Stroke Units at The University Hospital of Wales or Ward East 6 at Llandough Hospital, alternatively personal tributes and messages may be made via Audrey's online tribute page at *www.valefuneralservice.co.uk*

ROWLES
Edie

Peacefully at home on 27th March after an illness bravely borne. Cherished mother of Alan, Sandra, Linda, Janet and Simon, mother-in-law to Carol and Zuzanna. Loving nan to all her grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Resting at Park Funeral Directors, 7 Tynewydd Road, Barry, until the funeral service at 12pm on Wednesday, 6th April at Cardiff and Glamorgan Crematorium, Port Road, Barry.

Family flowers only, donations in lieu, if desired, may be made to Marie Curie Holme Tower.

Anniversary

MARSH
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2nd April 1966

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COLLEGE CELEBRATES ITS RUGBY ACADEMY SPONSORS

LEFT: Dan Watts presenting a shirt to The Wallich's corporate relations manager Zoë Westerman, and ABOVE: The team with sponsors Castell Howell.

CARDIFF and Vale College welcomed the sponsors of its rugby academy kit to the college recently to say 'thank you' for their support.

Under Armour, Castell Howell, The Wallich, Simply Fresh, Circle IT, EPOS and Lookers Jeep Cardiff have all offered their sponsorship to the academy team.

Lookers have also provided director of rugby Martyn Fowler with a sponsored car, but unfortunately they could not make it on the day.

The sponsors were invited to the BT Cardiff Arms Park, where they met the team. Rugby academy captain, 18-year-old Dan Watts from Dinas Powys, presented each sponsor with a framed rugby academy shirt.

They then watched the team score a win over Hereford Sixth Form College's rugby academy at the stadium.

Cardiff and Vale College deputy principal Kay Martin said: "Cardiff and Vale College really appreciates that businesses based in and around Cardiff are showing increasing support for our rugby academy. We are extremely pleased that these companies are valuing the next generation of Welsh rugby talent and we will repay this support as our players go from strength to strength, wearing their kit with pride."

What's on and where?

Valeways guided walks

ON Saturday, April 2 there will be a forest walk of seven miles; meet at Hensol Forest car park at 10am.

On Tuesday, April 5 Crwydro Ynys Y Barri will start from Gorsaf Reilffordd Ynys Y Barri at 10am.

Wednesday, April 6 at 10.30am the Coffee Shop Strollers of Barry will meet at Romilly Cafe on Cold Knap, Barry.

Dyfan Councillors Surgery

DYFAN Ward councillors Claire Curtis and Anthony Powell will hold their monthly councillors' surgery on Saturday, April 2 at the Buttrills Community Centre on North Walk, Barry. The surgery will run from 10am to 11am and no appointment is necessary.

Tax Help

TAXHELP for Older People (TOP) will hold a free income tax surgery at Roz Couzens' Chiropody Surgery, Unit 4, Commercial House, Commercial Street, Llantwit Major CF61 1RB on Monday, April 4 from 10am until midday.

No appointment necessary. For more information, call 0845 6013321 or 01308 488066.

Friends of the Earth

THE next meeting of Barry and Vale Friends of the Earth will be at 7.30pm on Tuesday, April 5.

Age Connects information and advice

IF you own your own home and are interested in equity release, and would like further advice and information, Age Connects Cardiff and Vale are holding an advice session at The Senior Health Shop, 38 Holton Road, Barry on Tuesday, April 5 from 10am to 12pm.

No appointment is needed, just come along and chat to an independent adviser. Contact 01446 732385 for further information.

A DROP-in centre for computer advice is held at Age Connects Cardiff and Vale Senior Health Shop on Thursday mornings, 10am to 12pm and is free.

The session is run by Barry Communities First; computers and tablets are provided, but you can bring your own. Call 01446/732385 for further information or just come along.

IF you are elderly or disabled and need advice or support on repairs or home improvements, Care and Repair in the Vale help older homeowners and private tenants adapt and maintain their homes. They can give advice on grants available and also give information on reputable companies to use.

Age Connects Cardiff and Vale will provide information on Tuesday, April 5 from 10am to 12pm. No appointment necessary, call the number above for information.

400 book fundraiser

EFFORTS to set up a community library in Rhoose kick off on Saturday, April 9 with a book sale.

From picture books to true crime and cookery, this event is at Rhoose community centre in Stewart Road from 10am to 12 noon. Free entry, cakes and refreshments available. All proceeds to Rhoose community library, which will open in June.

Vale of Glamorgan Walking Festival

BETWEEN May 19 and 22, Valeways will host the Vale of Glamorgan Walking Festival. The launch of this annual event will be held on Thursday, May 19 at 11am at the former tourist information centre, Barry Island.

Valeways invites those interested to RSVP by Tuesday, May 10 either by return email or telephone – 01446 749000.

Prior to this event walkers are welcome to take part in a short circular walk around Barry Island from 9.30am – 11am led, by Julie Morgan, Vale of Glamorgan Council tourism department.

Lunch at Age Connects

SPRING is here, so why not have a lunch at Age Connects Senior Health Shop?

Hot meals are available, cost £3.50. Hot desserts £1.80, light snacks and breakfasts also available.

Opening hours Monday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm; Tuesday 9.30am to 1.30pm and Wednesday 10.30 to 12.30pm. Contact 01446/7312385 for further information.

Penarth Aviation Society talk: The Schneider Trophy

THIS Friday, April 1 at 7.45pm for 8pm, the Penarth Aviation Society will hear a presentation entitled 'The Schneider Trophy' given by society member David Ephraim.

In the years following the Wright Brothers flight in 1903, public interest grew at an enormous rate.

This was helped in no small way by demonstrations of their latest aircraft by such pioneers as the Wrights and Glenn Curtiss from the USA, Santos-Dumont in France and SF Cody in Britain.

Naturally with such interest the idea of holding races took hold.

Foremost in these early races was the Gordon Bennett Cup.

In 1912, following a French victory in the Gordon Bennett, Jacques Schneider, a French industrialist and thrill seeker, inaugurated the race series bearing his name.

Since he was interested in the possibility of flying boats as a means of transport, his race series was for sea-planes.

The race series was held between 1913 and 1931 with a break during World War 1. The race was won by France, USA (2), Italy (3) and Great Britain (5) with Britain retaining the trophy in 1931. The aircraft and engine involved were to evolve into one of the iconic combinations – the Spitfire and Merlin respectively.

The race probably compressed 20 years of development into six.

Why not join the society? We meet on the first Friday of the month at the Penarth Conservative Club at 8pm. Visitors are welcome to attend a meeting and sample our hospitality prior to joining the society. For further information go to: Penarth Aviation Society's website (www.penarthaviationsociety.co.uk) or Facebook page (facebook.com/penarthaviationsociety.co.uk). **DE**

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CARDIFF WELCOMES RUNNERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD INCLUDING 'MO'

THE Cardiff World Half Marathon took place last Saturday, with thousands taking part and thousands lining the route.

Kenya's Geoffrey Kamworor won, with Britain's Mo Farah picking up the bronze medal.

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

OTHER PICTURES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THIS EVENT.

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DEPLETED COWBRIDGE FIRSTS BEATEN... BUT THE YOUTH TEAM IMPRESS IN LLANDAFF

COWBRIDGE first XV travelled to league strugglers Llandrindod Wells last Saturday.

Leaving the club at 11.30am with a severely depleted squad, the match kicked off at 2.40pm in driving rain that continued throughout the game.

With the howling wind behind them Cowbridge started well, the pack securing good ball in the first five minutes and despite the conditions it was a slick back movement that saw wing Luke James sprint over for a well taken try.

After a long period of forward pressure from the home side they were finally rewarded with a pushover try. Cowbridge responded with a Ben Wright penalty to regain the lead but Llandrindod were soon back in front with a second pushover try.

Then, with just minutes of the first half left, a loose kick from Llandrindod was collected by Richie Howson who fed centre Will Williams to sprint over from all of 40 metres. Wright expertly converted.

A minute later, following a powerful Cowbridge drive, the ball was spun out to captain Huw Lougher who burst through the defence to score a fine try under the posts.Wright again added the extras.

The half-time score was Llandrindod Wells 10, Cowbridge 22.

Unfortunately that was the end of the scoring for Cowbridge. With the weather unrelenting, the Llandrindod pack took control scoring three more pushover tries in the last 20 minutes, two of those coming when Cowbridge were down to 14 men, the game ending 25-22.

A disappointing outcome, especially as at half-time it looked as if Cowbridge might run away with the game, but with no substitutes and stamina-sapping conditions, it was always going to be difficult.

Meanwhile the Cowbridge youth BF side travelled to Llandaff North and the predicted weather forecast was indeed correct.

Despite the torrential rain the playing surface held up well. The squad of 19 contained a large contingent from the under-16 year group, all of which were representing the youth section for the first time.

Llandaff had a depleted squad so the game started with 12 players a side and despite going down to an early try from a blindside break by the Llandaff No.9, Cowbridge ran in an impressive try from their own 22.

It was a move started by Harrison Ashby with the ball passing skilfully through several pairs of hands, leaving Jac Roberts to level the game.

The Llandaff players significantly outweighed the younger Cowbridge squad and showed their intent from the start by playing a forward orientated game.

Despite the size difference, brave chop tackling from Luke John, Matthew Keating and Mike Dobbins kept the Llandaff forwards pegged back.

Scrum half Osian John provided some great service from the breakdown under pressure from the elements and the disruptive Llandaff forwards, which gave newcomer at 10 Bevan Howells the opportunity to launch the backline of Cowbridge, resulting in a try for full back Harrison Ashby in the corner.

Cowbridge were unlucky not to score again when a try scoring pass was deemed forward when it was clearly touched by the Llandaff defender, but Cowbridge did not change their game plan and kept the ball flowing through the hands wherever possible, sometimes attempting offloads that were not advisable in the weather conditions with winger Sean Davies coming close to scoring on a few occasions.

At half-time, a stern and sensible team talk by captain Luke John and coach Tom Cunnington focused on simplifying the plays and not to force the pass and to keep possession.

Josh Evans made way for Duncan Ace after doing some good work at the line out and in the loose. Flanker Ace got straight into the action, forcing a turnover and a penalty in quick succession.

A combination of clever chip kicks by Bev Howells and good pressure by Will Couzens in the Cowbridge pack kept Llandaff on the back foot and led to further Cowbridge tries for full back Harrison Ashby and one captain for Luke John.

Cowbridge winger Pete Anderson came agonisingly close after hooker Harry Hopkins stepped the onrushing defence and broke through from the 10 metre line of Llandaff.

Offloading to John inside the 22, only a desperate two man tackle on the try line prevented Anderson from increasing the Cowbridge lead.

The conditions deteriorated, as did the structure of the game, mainly due to very wet ball and many of the Cowbridge team playing with new team mates for the first time.

Llandaff made most of the wind advantage by keeping Cowbridge pinned down in their own 22 for a spell. A line out 10 metres out led to a pushover try from the Llandaff pack.

With the scores at 25-10 to Cowbridge, coach Tom Cunnington made the brave decision, after captain John had been forced to leave the field with a shoulder injury, to introduce all the substitutes.

Wingers Angus James and Sam Bluck both made an impact soon after coming on as the teams traded tries, the game finishing Cowbridge 35, Llandaff 15.

A special mention to under-16 players Bevan Howells, James Harrison, Jac Roberts, Harrison Ashby, Angus James and Sam Bluck who all stepped up under difficult conditions to contribute to the Cowbridge win.

This Saturday, the firsts travel to St Albans while the youth are scheduled to play Glamorgan Wanderers away. The following Saturday the firsts are home to Taffs Well.

The youth team are in the semi-final of the National Youth Cup - a fantastic achievement. The game is being played at the Llandarcy Academy, kicking off at 4pm, and there is a possibility that the firsts game will kick off earlier than the usual 2.30pm so supporters can travel to watch the youth - full details next week. **RV/RK/RH**

The Barry and District Ladies Skittle League

LATEST results from the Barry and District Ladies Skittle League for week commencing March 14:

First division: Family Affair (J Walden 30) 2611, SV Gals (J Richards 27) 250; Family and Friends (J Phillips 25) 237, Special Angels (C Thomas 25) 219; Castle Bandits (C Evans 28) 262, Space Finders (D Cleaver 27) 263; Cigar Ladies (L Webb 36) 318, Coppers (M Parsons 31) 309; Bakers Dozen (M Westorn 25) 237, Allsorts (R Dawee 28) 264; Barry Stars (M Richards 38) 318, Bobby's Girls (L Evans 36) 288; Breakaways (C Smith 31) 284, Colcot Ladies (S Howcroft 30) 290.

Second division: Clickies (N Harney 32) 280, Pila Palas (M Barnett, J Griffiths 30) 293; Red Admiral (J Jones 27) 241, Cad Con Fillies (T Clements, S Chilcott 24) 233; After Eights (D Goodard 35) 298, Castaways (J Tobin 28) 276; Rhoose Starlights (K Bryan 27) 252, Vixens (M Marks 28) 246; Little Devils (T Jones 22) 211, Merry Makers (R Collins, A Pope 22) 219; SV Lights (E Andrews 29) 262, Witchill Widows (C Gregory, S Hurn 28) 251.

Third division: Roller Coasters (J Marriott 28) 249, Hill Billies (J Lonas 24) 214; Friends and Neighbours (R Page 29) 262, Persuaders (K Kemp 23) 201; Fallen Angels (T Lawrence 25) 247, Westenders (T Lambeth 29) 250; La Belles (S Curtis 31) 314, SV Ladies (K Lacey 35) 296; Twilights (A Campbell 22) 184, Etcetera (K Barton 25) 203.

Fourth division: Witches (L Carey 23) 239, Guardian Angels (S Aston 24) 212; Living On A Spare (M Pring 33) 316, Witchill Wanderers (W Peplow 33) 229; Socialites (F Nolan 33) 259, Rebels (S Oram 31) 284; Liberals (F Williams, S Boyd 28) 259, Uptown Girls (J Marsh 24) 240; Hell Raisers (C Davies 29) 258, Odd Bods (T Ceriani 22) 173; Nite Outers (L Newman 26) 197, Aristocats (S Bebb 21) 205.

Results for March 7:

Fourth division: Guardian Angels (I Overton 30) 213, Optimists (E Playle, S Bond 24) 202; Challengers (M Griffiths 33) 308, Living On A Spare (C McLaggon 32) 266; Witchill Wanderers (C Harrison 33) 280, Socialites (P Starr 32) 292; Rebels (C Carter 22) 202, Liberals (S Boyd 21) 156; Uptown Girls (J Marsh 27) 234, Off The Rails (L Stephenson 25) 220; Odd Bods (T Cerian 27) 239, Witches (P Cookson 29) 278; Aristocats (P Dasncey 25) 241, Hell Raisers (B Nugent 25) 213.

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The Mail on Sunday winning team.

Brynhill GC welcome their winning team!

THE 'Old Record Club' resumed their monthly appearance at Brynhill Golf Club on Sunday, March 27.

There was a large turn out as the Brynhill Mail on Sunday national winners were presented with their trophies.

The team won in grand style in Spain in November 2015 and Brynhill honoured their success with the presentation, including a beautiful cake especially made for them by the president Keith Atkinson's daughter-in-law, Laura Atkinson.

The vice captain Mr. Mike Underdown introduced the evening's proceedings.

The captain, Mr. Matthew Thomas, and the president presented the trophies to Wayne Adams, the captain of the winning team, who responded by thanking everyone for their support and in coming to the presentation night, in particular Jo Kirkpatrick for all the press coverage and raffles, Roger North Long and partner, Chris James, the president, vice captain, senior and ladies section, Simmon and Debbie Pringle, and all the members who donated their winnings from presentation night.

He added that the support from the members who had followed all the knock-out matches had been really appreciated by the team, as it probably improved their game by another 10 per cent.

Mr. Peter Hayman, the retired president, was always there supporting the team and woe betide them if they made a bad shot! Wayne thanked all those who followed them to Spain.

He said that the Mail on Sunday officials commented on how the team were a credit to Brynhill Golf Club, especially in the way they presented themselves - well done team!

JK

THE VALE FOOTBALL LEAGUE ROUND-UP

IN the game of the day Premier Division leaders St Athan moved seven points clear with a 1-0 victory over second place Wenvoe Arms at Station Road.

Wenvoe have a game in hand in second place, while defending champions Cardiff Airport sit 10 points off top but do have three games in hand. Airport edged out Barry Athletic 3-2 at the Athletic Ground to leap frog them into third.

Elsewhere in the Premier Division, Penarth held AFC Rhoose to a scoreless draw, while Cowbridge Town downed Island Marine 3-1 at Maslin Park.

The result of the SP Construction vs Masons Moving Group was still unknown as of writing.

In the First Division, the big clash saw leaders Sully Sports triumph 4-2 over Barry Belgrade - the result sees Belgrade drop to seventh in an increasingly tight league, however they sit 12 points off top with a mammoth six games in hand.

Sully stay four points ahead of Cogan who kept pace with the leaders with a 4-1 win over Cadoxton Athletic. Cogan, however, have three games in hand over Sully.

Elsewhere Tynewydd's impressive winning run hit a blip as they were held 0-0 by AFC Rhoose B.

The game was overshadowed by an unfortunate injury to Lloyd Bruce - the Vale league clubs wish him well in his recovery.

Cadoxton Barry notched a 3-2 win over Cardiff Airport B and Glenbrook were successful by the same scoreline against FC Pumas.

Finally, in the First Division, Vale United went third after they complete outclassed BV, as they more than routed the bottom side, beating them by an incredible 15-0.

Only three games took place in the Second Division as St Athan B made it three games without defeat with a 3-2 win over Penarth Town.

Barry Albion held third place Knap FC 3-3 and Dockers closed the gap on Barry Atheltic B at the top to just two points with a 2-0 win over FC Pumas B as the title race intensified.

On Saturday, the game of the day is in the First Division with Vale United having their 10 game unbeaten streak in the league put to the test by second place Cogan.

HD

'Make courts more accessible' - CALL

AS we near the start of the British tennis season, a campaign has been launched by a voluntary tennis organisation, urging councils across Wales to make sure that public courts are accessible to everyone wanting to play the sport.

Tennis Connect Wales is calling on local authorities to commit to opening public tennis courts daily between the months of April and October, and is asking fans of the sport to join its #GatesOpen4All campaign by sharing their experiences of public tennis courts in Wales via social media, using the hashtag.

Steve Milne, founder of Tennis Connect Wales, said: "Not everyone lives near, or can afford, a private tennis club and for many people in Wales a court at their local park or leisure centre is the only way they can play the sport.

"But a lot of the time you'll find that the gates to these courts are locked. It defeats the purpose of having them there in the first place.

"In Wales we're not blessed with the greatest weather and, with a shortage of decent indoor tennis facilities too, it's important to make the most of any good weather we do get."

Tennis Connect Wales is also keen to hear from people with any other issues that prevent them playing tennis locally. For some people it may be that they don't have a nearby public court at all; for others it may be that the playing fee is too high. Perhaps the courts just haven't been maintained and are unsafe.

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) has identified an increase in 'parks' tennis as a key factor for the future growth of the sport in the UK but, to date, there's little sign of change in non-traditional tennis areas like the south Wales Valleys or more rural parts of north Wales.

"If you're looking to grow parks tennis then surely your first priority is to make sure the courts are open, and stay open," says Steve Milne. "Unless community facilities are made available to everyone, the next generation of Welsh tennis players may never get to realise their potential."

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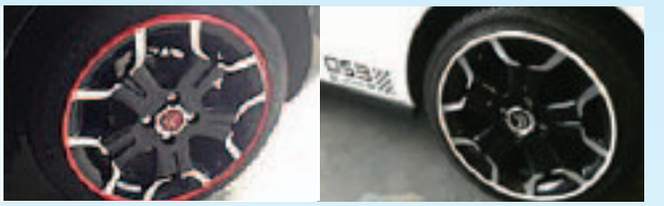

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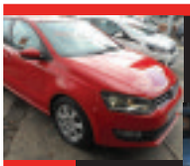

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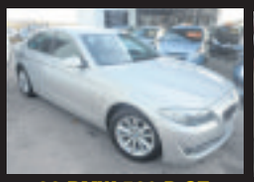

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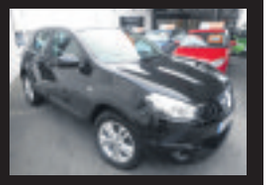

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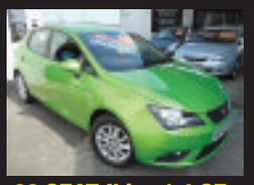

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Atrocious conditions at local point-to-point meeting

IN my 50 years of reporting on the Welsh point-to-point scene, I don't think I have ever endured such atrocious conditions like those that prevailed at Uplands Farm, Ystradowen last Saturday.

Heavy showers and a gale force wind that blew away bookmaker James Lovell's big betting stand umbrella had racegoers dashing to their cars and anywhere else that could give them some respite.

And the going, which could have been descibed as good at the start of the day, changed to heavy as the afternoon went on.

The happiest person on the course was probably 21-year-old Bradley Gibbs who repeated his hat-trick of last year when winning the Glamorgan Hunt Club Members Conditions Race on See U Again Son, the Mixed Open Race on My Coranna and the Restricted Race on C Me In Oz.

See U Again Son, like My Coranna, is owned by Bradley's girlfriend Claire Sheriff and is qualified with the Glamorgan Hunt.

The seven-year-old bay gelding led three fences from home to score by three lengths from Bob The Butcher.

The seven-year-old mare My Coranna, who like See U Again Son is trained by Bradley's father David Gibbs, made it three wins in a row when finishing eight lengths ahead of the pacemaking Sheriff Hutton and Bradley's third win came when Rob and Julie McClean's ex-Irish C Me In Oz got the better of Gardiners Hill in the Restricted.

C Me In Oz, which had finished runner-up in his previous two races won by two lengths and is trained by Maesteg's Simon Jones.

The first leg of a Tom David double was initiated when Keith James' eight-year-old chestnut gelding Itchyme'mscratch easily took the opening Glamorgan Hunt Members, Subscribers & Farmers Race coming home an official nine lengths ahead of the Bradley Gibbs partnered Thomas Junior, so easily that the winning connections said they planned to run him again at Lydstep on Easter Monday.

National Hunt trainer Tim Vaughan, who trains just a couple of miles away from the course at Aberthin, was there to see his Hawkhill trail in last of the four runners after being prominent throughout most of the race.

However, Tim had plenty to smile about later in the day when he heared that his Belize had carried a hefty top weight of 11st 12lbs to victory at Newton Abbot when beating the bottom weighted Tresor De La Vie, who had just 10 stone to carry by 24 lengths.

Its A Mistake, which gave Tom his second winner in the Seven-Year-Olds And Over Open Maiden Race when finishing five lengths ahead of An Cor, had fallen in the lead at the second last fence in his previous race won by WithOutTheFavourite at the Beaufort Hunt.

But this time the nine-year-old bay gelding, in a handy position throughout, made no mistake and Sirrel Griffiths, of Norton's Coin fame, was there to see his son Martyn, who owns and trains the horse, cheer home his winner.

Tom's younger brother Evan, aged 23, took the Four, Five And Six Year-Olds Open Maiden Race on the best turned out Live For Today, a first time winner between-the flags for owner David Bond.

A former reject of National Hunt trainer Dai Burchell, this five-year-old bay gelding by Alflora, was thought to be "unraceable".

However, trainer Nick Williams, who gave up race-riding at the end of last season, said: "We have been riding him on the sands at Ogmore by Sea and it has worked wonders and he now appears to have got over his difficulties."

Thanks must go to the seven bookmakers who braved the conditions, thus ensuring that punters could back their fancies, and with all six races being won by well fancied horses, it was probably a day they won't forget for more reasons than one.

TIM'S EASTER MONDAY DOUBLE

Aberthin's Tim Vaughan had a nice little double at Market Rasen on Easter Monday when his Man Of God won the Conditional Jockeys' Handicap hurdle and 40 minutes or so later his Debece took the Maiden Open NH Flat race.

The former was ridden by D G Noonan and the latter by Noel Fehily and both horses were well backed.

BRIAN LEE

St Athan FC go clear at the top

ST ATHAN moved seven points clear with a magnificent team performance and come away from second place Wenvoe with a 1-0 triumph.

Jordan Mortimore headed the eventual winner before the break as Saints put in a rearguard performance to be proud of with keeper Paul Lucas in astounding form.

Wenvoe started the day four points behind of leaders Saints with a game in hand and knew anything other than a win could be disastrous.

St Athan, however, knew the importance of the fixture as they start a run of games that also sees them play Cardiff Airport twice.

Wenvoe started brightly and looked to move the ball around but Saints were organised and well drilled and the home struggled to break them down.

Wenvoe registered an early shot on goal and Paul Lucas was called on to make an outstanding low save to his right after a rasping strike.

Wenvoe continued to probe and once again Lucas was called upon to produce a fine stop following a deflected effort.

Up the other end, good work from Sean Flynn saw tireless Sean Wilkin with an effort off target.

Still Wenvoe came at St Athan, but Saints stood firm in defence, frustrating their opponents.

Then came the breakthrough. Saints won a corner, Reece Lewis exquisite delivery saw Jordan Mortimore rise to head the ball in for his 40th goal of the season, a fine achievement for the Saints captain.

St Athan went in at the break in the lead but knew Wenvoe would come out of the traps quickly in the second half.

The home side did just that and when they did finally find a hole in the Saints defence they found Lucas in exceptional form as he produced another excellent save.

Saints' rearguard action was outstanding and the frustration boiled out of Wenvoe.

But then a Wenvoe lifeline; quick feet in the area saw their forward brought down and a penalty awarded, but nothing was beating Lucas and the finest of fingertips saw the ball rebound off the post. Saints breathed again.

Wenvoe threw everything at St Athan now and everything was blocked, tackled or cleared away.

The Saints back four was impenetrable, their midfield working non stop to get a foot in - to a man, Saints worked for each other.

Watkins and Flynn combined to release Wilkins, and time stood still as Wilkins raced at the keeper but his left foot effort narrowly wide.

Ball after ball into the Saints box was repelled and finally the referee's whistled signalled the end of a pulsating encounter.

St Athan now sit seven points clear atop of the Premier Division - Wenvoe have a game in hand in second place, while third place Cardiff Airport sit 10 points off Saints but do have three games in hand.

What a team performance from St Athan - they gave everything and got the three points they throughly deserved.

St Athan: Lucas, Goodwin, L.Lewis, Mortimore, Humphreys, Laing, Ashton, R.Lewis, Austin, Flynn, Wilkin. Substitutes - Watkins, Pugh.

Meanwhile, the seconds notched a fine 3-2 win over Penarth B, the impressive Josh Morgan once again getting on the scoresheet with a brace and Shane Campbell popped up and got the winner.

We'd like to thank those who braved the rain to support us and our sponsors, Owens Motor Services, Llandow, Diving & Marine Engineering, Green Future Landscaping, Llantwit Valet & Car Wash and both the Three Horseshoes & The Four Bells pubs in St Athan.

HD

Scorpions land their first win of the season

GOOD Friday was a great Friday for South Wales Scorpions after earning their first win of the season, beating Oxford 38-20 at Iffley Road after dominating the second half.

It was a big team effort from the Welsh with Dai Evans leading the way with two tries and was at least twice unlucky not to get a hat-trick.

The win was on the cards. Oxford were playing their last match at Iffley Road after being there since inception in 2013. And the first team to play there was South Wales Scorpions, who that time scraped a 22-20 win.

But this performance was far more convincing with new Scorpions head coach Phil Carleton building a regime that installs confidence in the whole club.

The sides fought out an even first 10 minutes where forward passes at each end dented opportunities for opening tries Oxford's came after a good break from Sean Morris and it was some good Scorpions defending that forced him into a desperate pass.

Scorpions took the lead on 13 minutes when, following a penalty, Aiden Hema barged his way under the sticks and Emanuelli converted.

They soon got the second try after Dai Evans intercepted a loose pass and no-one could catch the flying winger as he ran 90 metres to score in the corner. Emanuelli missed the kick.

A dropped ball from kick-off gave Oxford the chance for a try. Plenty of times in the last couple of years Scorpions would have conceded, but again were solid in what was a risky set.

Scorpions carried on attacking well but a third try was denied after a pass to Evans, who was clear, bounced forward. Oxford struck back from the scrum. Andy Hoggins made the break leading to Morris setting up Connor Hughes in the corner, but failing to convert his own try.

Oxford scored again from their next play after a good move saw Aaron Dobek go in under the sticks. Hughes converted to level things at 10-10.

Christiaan Roets had the opportunity to put Scorpions in the lead at the break but was stopped just metres from the line on the last tackle of a set as the clock approached 40.

The first half may have deservedly been even but there was only ever one winner after the break.

Less than five minutes into the second half, a good set of passes saw Jordan Sheridan dive over. Emanuelli converted.

The Scorpions added a quick second when Christiaan Roets took advantage of a repeat set to barge over with Emanuelli again adding the extras.

Then, following two penalties, Evans walked over in the corner for Scorpions' fifth try, making it 28-10 on 53 minutes.

Oxford struck back to give them hope. Andy Hoggins did well to run through and ground but the kick went wide, still leaving them 14 points short.

But they couldn't keep up the momentum - instead their poor passing continued to let them down.

A Scorpions scrum after a chuck forward gave Greg Wilde the chance to sprint to the line and Emanuelli added the extras.

Oxford weren't making any opportunities count. A pass to Errol Carter flew into touch and after panicking, criminally a penalty kick to touch failed to reach the sideline.

Danny Allen did get another score back from close range after receiving from Josh Nathaniel at dummy half.

The conversion was drop kicked over for quickness by Hughes but 14 points down in the last two minutes was just too much for them.

It was left to Yannic Parker to score in the corner for the final points of the game to wrap up a deserved win for south Wales' only professional rugby league side.

IG

The Barry and District league tables and results

CRIB DIVISION 1:

West End 5, Rhoose Social 10; Cadoxton Cons 10, West End Runaways 5; Wyndham Cons 5, Liberals 10.

League table: Wyndham Cons 157, West End 151, Liberals 149, Rhoose Social 147, West End Runaways 146, Cadoxton Cons 138, Moors Boys 132.

SKITTLES DIVISION 1:

Rugby Club 3, Allsorts 4; Rhoose Social A 6, Liberals C 1; Rhoose Social B 4, Rhoosters 3; West End D 5, King William XII 2.

League table: Sea View B 99.5, West End D 86, Rugby Club 82.5, Barries Boys 76, King William XII 73.5, Rhoose Social A 72, Rhoose Social B 71.5, West End C 71, Allsorts 69.5, Slammers 65, Rhoosters 61, Liberals A 58, Liberals C 56.5, Rhoose Social C 53, Cambrian Flyers 48.

SNOOKER DIVISION 1:

Market Street C 2, Penarth Cons B 3; Harbour B 4, Rhoose Social B 1; Wyndham Cons A 4, West End C 1; Cadoxton Cons Z 3, Rhoose Social C 2; CaddyAllstars 2, SavoyA 3.

League table: Harbour B 86, Savoy A 85, Cadoxton Cons B 71, Wyndham Cons A 66, West End C 60, *Cadoxton Cons Z 50, Rhoose Social B 41, Rhoose Social C 40, Caddy Allstars 39, Penarth Cons B 39, Market Street C 34.

SNOOKER DIVISION 2:

Sully Sports A 1, Savoy B 4; Wyndham Cons C 1, Penarth Cons A 4; West End B 0, Liberators 5; Market Street B 3, Cadoxton Cons A 2; West End A 1, Services Social B 4.

League table: Services Social B 78, Liberators 72, Penarth Cons A 71, Market Street B 68, Savoy B 68, Wyndham Cons C 61, Cadoxton Cons A 53, West End A 47, Sully Sports A 41, West End B 34, Wyndham Cons D 32 (* = points deducted).

All league & cup fixtures and results at www.barryleagues.co.uk and on Facebook - search for 'barry leagues'.

JW

BARRIVALE BRIDGE CLUB RESULTS

LATEST results from Barrivale Bridge Club for March 22:

1st Nike Best & Noelle Bond 63.54%; 2nd Peter Millar & Jane Brook 56.25%; 3rd Kay Dyer & Sean Macdougall 53.65%. Dave Reed and Bryn Gough won on handicap.

New members are always welcome at Barrivale. A partner may be arranged if required.

If you would like to join us ring 01446 418380 or 01446 733425 or 01446 735592 call at the Pioneer Hall, Beryl Road, Barry on Tuesdays at 7pm.

Alternatively players, inexperienced or new, may attend on Fridays at 10am at the same address.

DR

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Send your match reports, news and other items of interest to: gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk

Lessons learned as under-strength Wales warm up for European Championships

by GARETH JAMIESON

AS Wales shape up for their first international tournament in 58 years (words that are still exciting to write even now) as they travel to France for the European Championships, it has come against a backdrop of contract negotiations with Chris Coleman (out of contract after the tournament) being unresolved, Coleman placing a ban on the wives and girlfriends of players being in the same hotel as them at least until after the group stages, and speculation on the future availability of Gareth Bale – the sort of background gossip and drama that so often unfolds in the world of Welsh rugby rather than football.

But then that is the price of success – greater scrutiny, heightened expectations, all things that this Wales team, fresh from making history, will no doubt be savouring as an after-effect of their achievements. They were preparing for a friendly double-header with Northern Ireland on Thursday at the Cardiff City Stadium, and then an away encounter with Ukraine on Monday, both opposition teams having impressively qualified for the Euros and both sure to provide stern opposition for a Welsh team missing some of the key ingredients of their own qualifying success through injury and unavailability.

In front of a reasonable crowd of just under 22,000 on Thursday (a figure less than half of the number of fans who applied for tickets to the Euros however), came the first test in Michael O'Neill's Northern Ireland. Games between the countries in recent times have always been tight affairs, and O'Neill's men, whose qualification success was all the more impressive for their lack of a star name, promised to give Wales a tough work-out in a game that had a derby feel.

Certainly the opening half of the game had that edge, the wet weather not lending itself to a particularly graceful game, but one that saw plenty of ball for both teams, the Northern Irish looking by far the more comfortable, and Wales lacking the penetration needed to cause the opposition much distress, their 4-5-1 formation a chance to test out plan B.

It seemed like it would be more of the same in the second half as conditions failed to improve, Wales' lack of urgency and execution giving Northern Ireland little trouble, the team looking compact and well-organised.

The game turned on the hour mark as failure to clear at a corner allowed Craig Cathcart to strike for the visitors, leaving a below-par Welsh team to battle their way back.

The strike seemed to do the trick as Wales looked far more lively in this final third of the match, and pushed for an equaliser, seemingly to no avail. When it seemed like the Northern Irish were to hold out for their first away friendly win in over a decade, Wales caught a stroke of luck when Gareth McAuley upended Simon Church in the penalty area.

Church dusted himself down and dispatched the spot kick to the relief and celebrations of the home fans, and Wales could have gone on to take what would have been an undeserved win with a few half chances in injury time.

Coleman was pleased with the performance, saying that the side could take away "lots of positives" from the game. However, privately he would have to have been disappointed with some of the performances from players in the first hour whose places on the plane to France are anything but assured.

It was then onto the Ukraine on Monday, where Coleman made six changes from the team that lined up on Thursday, reverting to the 5-3-2 formation that had served so well in the qualifiers, and it seemed to do the trick as Coleman's team started the brighter, albeit again lacking the cutting edge that similarly had eluded them in Cardiff.

It seemed like history repeating, however, when the Welsh defence failed to track from a free-kick and Yarmolenko benefited, striking from close range to give the Ukraine the lead, arguably against the run of play. The first half fizzled out with no change in the score, but the second half saw Wales rejuvenated and showing a greater sense of purpose.

The usual friendly tradition of numerous substitutions threatened to disrupt Wales' flow against opposition now happy to sit back and counter-attack, but instead it served to galvanise the team.

Tom Bradshaw (making his debut) and Sam Vokes came off the bench and provided a cutting edge that was lacking before, the two forwards linking well and having the best opportunities to level the game.

It wasn't to be, however, and Wales found themselves having lost despite having dominated the stats in terms of shots and possession.

The next time the squad meet up it will be the 23 players selected by Coleman to represent the country at the European Championships, and these two fixtures provided a great opportunity to look at some of the fringe players hoping to make up that squad. Some players impressed, some failed to grab the opportunity with both hands (Tom Lawrence in particular disappointing over the two matches), but there were positives to take from the games.

The overwhelming lesson is that without our star players we are a different team, but only the most one-eyed fan would have disagreed with that prior to these matches. What we showed was that we are set-up superbly, are difficult to break down and can retain possesion with ease; what the likes of Bale, Ramsey and Robson-Kanu provide is that missing cutting edge, that burst of pace or bit of skill to open the opposition up. The fact that the only goal we scored in the two games was from the penalty is evidence, if any were needed, of this.

With just over two months until Wales kick off their Euro 2016 campaign in Bordeaux against Slovakia, the return of these players will give the team a much-needed boost and that x-factor that is the difference between competing and winning. With the team on song, then there is no-one we need fear – bring on the Euros!

Dinas on the wrong end of a five goal thriller

DINAS POWYS FC started well in this game with Cwmbran Celtic, winning an early free kick and a couple of throw-ins before the visitors started pressing, winning a corner from which Chris Ham shot over the bar.

Simon Prangley then got a shot away bringing a save from James Curtin for another Celtic corner.

Rhys Palmer then put in a strong run for Dinas down the left wing but his cross was cut out by the Celtic defence.

Curtin was again called into action to punch a corner clear.

Sam Adamson was having a fine game for Dinas at right back keeping the powerful Celtic players at bay. However, a deep cross from the right wing was met by Ham and his effort was only just wide.

With 30 minutes gone, the visitors got the opener from a Ham corner, Josh Bull scoring off the underside of the cross-bar.

At this stage the heavens opened, making conditions very difficult, but Dinas kept their concentration and were soon level, Scott Muir glancing a header home from an Adam Johns cross.

Lloyd Kinsella then picked the ball up for Celtic and hit an unstoppable shot from 30 yards to give the visitors the lead again.

In the slippery conditions Curtin dived on a ball on the edge of his area but it slipped from his grasp leaving Bull an easy tap in for 3-1.

In the final minute of the half James Marr pulled one back for Dinas, heading home a James Bloxham free kick.

The visitors pressed early in the second half and Curtin had to punch a corner over his cross bar.

Dinas started playing to their strengths, Johns forcing a good save from Lewis Watkins and after Johns was fouled on the edge of the Celtic box, Nicky Bruce hit a fine free kick just wide of Watkins right post.

The visitors made the first substitution, Andrew Larcombe making way for Lee Penney.

Bruce fired in another free kick from the halfway line which Watkins took at full stretch.

The home side then rang the changes, Rhys Palmer being replaced by Myles Case with 12 minutes remaining.

Celtic won two further corners but couldn't add to their score and Dinas were looking the more likely to level at this stage, good work from Case put Johns in but his effort was too high.

Dinas made their final substitution with four minutes remaining, Muir making way for Courtney Aviet.

Play was then held up for a while as James Marr appeared to be elbowed in the eye but was okay to see out the final couple of minutes after treatment.

Squad: 1 James Curtin, 2 Sam Adamson, 3 Mamadu Banguraso, 4 James Bloxham, 5 Paul Caulfield, 6 Nicky Bruce, 7 James Marr (1), 8 Kieron James (c), 9 Adam Johns, 10 Scott Muir (1), 11 Rhys Palmer, 12 Myles Case, 14 Rhys Harlin, 15 Courtney Aviet.

Dinas now have five consecutive home games where they must endeavour to accrue points, starting with the visit of Llanelli Town on Saturday, April 9, 2.30pm kick off. **PK**

Cowbridge Darts League round-up

ON Tuesday March 22, it was the penultimate evening of league darts.

The Edmondes B, even with still one game to go, achieved enough points by beating the Edmondes A 6-3 to become this year's league champions.

However, the runner-up slot is still be decided.

The second-placed Highwayman Inn beat the Farmers B (H&H) 7-2 but Llanharry closed the gap down to two points by winning 8-1 against the Old Post Ladies.

The Six Bells Inn, this season's newcomer, ended their league programme by being narrowly defeated 4-5 against the Edmondes C.

The Farmers Arms did not have a game.

Present league standings are: Edmondes B (97 points), Highwayman Inn (83), Llanharry (81), Six Bells Inn (75), Farmers Arms (68), Edmondes A (66), Edmondes C (64), Farmers B (H&H) (56) and Old Post Ladies (22).

Next Tuesday, April 5, the Llanharry Working Men's Club will host the men's single knockout competition.

The evening of darts starts at 8.15pm and spectators are welcome.

For further information e-mail Paul at *cowbridgedarts@gmail.com*, up-to-date information can be found on the website: *www.darts.apsn.co.uk* **PJT**

Barry men's skittle league

DIVISION 1: Barry Park 'B'(P.Gersnenson 32) 286, BP Breakaways (P.Gardner, D.A.Coombes 31) 291; Blue Monkey (D.Cook 29) 267, The Merrymen (L. Dodgson 27) 286; Bunker Boys (S.Hobbs 28) 291, Barry Park'B'(B.Hopkins 28) 249; Cavaliers (S.Hatcher 29) 283, Ex-servicemen (D.Stephens 32) 291; Geest (D.Williams 30) 284, Colcot Boys (T.Sherrin 32) 266; Mighty Dockers (K.Enticott 26) 262, Blue Monkey (D.McCarthy 24) 278; Sea View (D.Britton 30) 302, Bunker Boys (B.Hewitson 32) 304; The Hairy Lemons (S.Guely 33) 289, Mighty Dockers (K.Enticott 26) 260.

Division 2: Abercrete (M.Watts 31) 268, Tynewydd Lads (S.Sluman 30) 287; Buffs Exiles (A.Kemp 27) 253, Willie Wombles (E.Draisey 32) 292; Cannon Balls (D.Pike, T.Sparks 29) 301, Posties (J.Galsworthy, R.Harding, M.Churchill 30) 306; 'H' Bells (B.Whitlock, B.Webb 28) 291, The Royalists (M.Roberts 31) 279; Park Lads (M.Whyman, D.Lambert 26) 251, Tynny Fliers (G.Hobbs 25) 201; Park Rangers (S.Dite 28) 263, Abercrete (P.Fifiled 28) 258.

Division 3: Billy Whizz (M.Ingram 31) 285, Castle Boys (D.Woodham 30) 287; British Rail (K.Brown 29) 290, The Alternatives (A.Stafford 29) 268; C.U.D (B.Saif 27) 246, Mariner Vikings (D.Burrows 26) 232; Castle Boys (J. Adams 27) 256, Billy Bluebirds (R Jones 30) 280; West End Fliers (R.Green 27) 260, Billy Whizz (S.Coombs, M.Ingram 26) 260. **HR**

ROSS ENGLAND - STANDING UP FOR BARRY & THE VALE

Labour's failure to build the Island link road on time is holding Barry back.

Ross and the Welsh Conservatives will save our High Streets by slashing business rates.

Q&A with your next Vale AM, Ross England

Barry resident Ross England answers questions so GEM readers can learn more about the man who is set to represent Vale constituents after May 5th 2016.

Question: *Ross, tell our readers more about yourself – what are you hoping to achieve after election?*

Ross: I live in Barry, and feel very fortunate to wake every morning to some of the best views in the country. I was born and brought up in Cardiff and – despite my surname! – I am proud to be Welsh. The Vale is such a special place, having seen the work Alun has done to champion the area, I was selected by my party to represent residents in Cardiff Bay. Issues like health and education impact the lives of all of us on a daily basis. I want to bang the drum – and be a voice for the Vale in the Welsh Government rather than being simply a voice for the Welsh Government in the Vale.

Question: *What sort of Assembly Member does the Vale need?*

Ross: We need a champion for the Vale in Cardiff Bay. Since 1999, the Vale has been ignored and starved of funding – despite the current AM being the finance minister! What really motivates me is continuing the regeneration of Barry, and fighting against the ridiculous arbitrary housing targets and making sure that the Vale doesn't become a dumping ground to meet the housing targets for Cardiff.

Question: *Do you have any other message for residents of the Vale?*

Ross: The Vale of Glamorgan is the assembly seat that will determine who the next First Minister is. Andrew RT Davies will make a first-rate First Minister, and I want to work closely with him and Alun Cairns MP to champion the Vale.

I have been very much encouraged by the response from local people out and about in Barry and the Vale. If you see me knocking doors, please say hello and if you have any questions during the campaign, just email me at ross.england@welshconservatives.com or call 01446 744 126.

Ross organised the successful campaign to stop car parking charges.

Andrew RT Davies and Alun Cairns MP are backing Ross to be the Vale's next AM.

Ross is working with Alun Cairns MP to push for wider broadband access.

Andrew RT Davies has pledged to deliver the Dinas Powys by-pass as First Minister.

Ross England is passionate about banging the drum for local investment and driving the local economy forward.

Ross England is campaigning to stop the Vale becoming part of Cardiff, he warns that a merger would pose a new threat to green sites like Weycock Cross.

This 4-page wrap has been funded by voluntary donations to the Vale of Glamorgan Conservatives.

ROSS ENGLAND - STANDING UP FOR BARRY & THE VALE

Last chance to save the Vale from Cardiff merge

This May's Welsh Assembly election will determine whether the Vale of Glamorgan continues to exist. Labour have pledged to make the Vale part of Cardiff as part of their local government reorganisation if they cling on to control of the Welsh Assembly in May.

The Labour plan to 'scrub the Vale off the map' will be a disaster according to Ross England who warns that large parts of the Vale could be 'concreted over' to meet Cardiff's housing demand.

The plan will be worse than 'the bad old days of South Glamorgan' according to local Conservatives as there won't even be a separate Vale district council. This time the Vale will be just a part of a larger Cardiff unitary authority area.

Senior local government officials have warned that the number of new dwellings set to be built in the Vale could double from 10,000 to 20,000. Cardiff Councillors will outnumber councillors representing Vale wards by as many as three to one. They are widely expected to use the Vale's green space to end the political battle of further building in Cardiff's green belt.

Ross England has said the Vale will clearly become "a building site and dumping ground for Cardiff politicians."

He added, "Labour need only lose one seat to lose control of the Assembly. We can stop the merger."

Vale to be "concreted over" if Labour win in May

The Vale of Glamorgan is likely to be 'concreted over', with the special character of local communities lost forever, if merged with Cardiff according to local Conservatives.

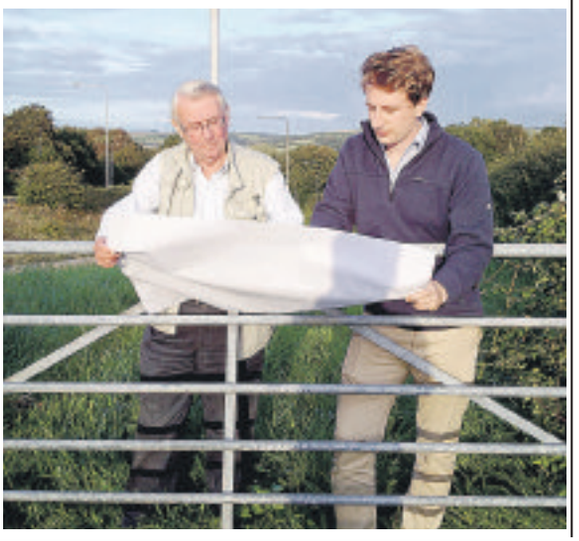
The Conservatives have learned that senior local government officials predict that the 'already highly excessive' target of 10,000 new houses for the Vale could be effectively doubled as a result of a merger with Cardiff.

The Labour Welsh Government's decision to impose an arbitrary target for 10,000 new houses is to blame for the inappropriate development across the county according to local MP Alun Cairns. He warns that 20,000 would mean the effective 'urbanisation' of many parts of the Vale.

Prospective AM Ross England, who has vowed to scrap the excessive top-down housing targets and stop the merger of the Vale with Cardiff, declared that the coming election was "no less than a struggle for the soul of our historic county."

Ross said, "Labour's post-May plan to merge us with Cardiff would present the capital's politicians with a convenient building site and dumping ground in the form of the Vale.

"20,000 new dwellings would be a death sentence for the charm and character of our communities. We can and must stop this."



Five things you need to know about the election on May 5th

FACT 1

After 17 years under Labour, Wales is falling behind as the state of the NHS shows. Their complacency and incompetence risk Wales' long term furture.

FACT 2

Jeremy Corbyn's Labour want another five more years in power. During this time **the Assembly will get the power to levy income tax. Do you want Corbyn's party controlling your tax?**

FACT 3

Labour have pledged to merge the Vale with Cardiff if they hold on to power. Our area would become a convenient dumping ground and building site for Cardiff politicians.

FACT 4

Labour only need to lose one seat to lose control of the Assembly. So every vote here will be decisive. Last year showed Conservatives winning seats from Labour across Wales.

FACT 5

Only by **voting Welsh Conservative can you achieve real change for Wales,** delivering the competent leadership Wales needs so we don't get left behind.

Promoted by George Carroll on behalf of Ross England, both of 29 High Street, Barry CF62 7EB.
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